

commonweal

ONE DOLLAR

REVIEWS:
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Correspondence

A convert's view

Albuquerque, N.M.

To the Editors: Is there life after ecumenism? [Jan. 29] A good question, aptly put. It is most often the middle-aged and elderly who have spent a lifetime in the church who are said to feel the keenest distress because of the swift currents of change since Vatican II. But I have seen little or nothing concerning those of us who are converts and have joined the church within the past fifteen or twenty years.

Many of us applaud, I believe, the most worthy and necessary of those changes, and no doubt approve of the "new" social consciousness we find throughout much of the church today. But just how far, we might ask, is enough?

I, for one, became a Catholic not only because I came to believe at long last in the Catholic church as the one true church, but also precisely because of the awesome majesty and poetry I found there in its liturgy, sacraments, and tradition. I would argue that these things, too, are vital to a living faith that is to endure in our rootless age.

It's altogether ironic. Those who view this whole matter as I do must often experience with me the uneasy feeling that, had we only remained in the Protestant tradition a few years longer, the Catholic church might have joined *us*, rather than the other way round.

IVAN INNERST

Wild Jim Hitchcock?

Washington, D.C.

To the Editors: In her article on "Catholic Liberals and Abortion" [Nov. 20], Mary Meehan quotes a 1977 article by James Hitchcock which indicts the Center of Concern for influencing the 1976 election. She might have made an effort to check such a reference and been able to discover that it was without foundation in reality: the Center has never issued "position papers" aimed at maintaining an

anti-abortion stance by the Democratic party. Honest journalism on Meehan's part would have called for more reliable research. If she, or Hitchcock, is unable to substantiate such wild claims, then we request an apology.

(REV.) PETER J. HENRIOT, S.J.

Director, Center of Concern

The author replies:

Father Henriot misunderstood both the letter and the spirit of the Hitchcock reference. Prof. Hitchcock did not "indict" the Center of Concern, nor did he say that it issued position papers to encourage an anti-abortion stance by the Democratic party in 1976. He simply said that one of the groups that pressed Catholics to fall into line behind the Democratic party then, *despite its pro-abortion stance*, was composed of "clergy, many of them relative newcomers to politics and still flushed with the enthusiasm of untarnished idealism, who wanted the Catholic vote to be determined by position papers emanating from groups like Network and the Center for Concern." He thus suggested that many of the clergy were idealistic and a bit naive, and also that they were so eager to promote some liberal causes backed by Network and the Center — and also by the Democratic party — that they were willing to overlook the pro-abortion position of the party. Prof. Hitchcock was criticizing such members of the clergy; he was not criticizing Network or the Center.

I wish that Father Henriot had noted whether the Center of Concern has a position on abortion. A group concerned about social justice and human rights should, it seems to me, realize that human rights begin when human life begins.

MARY MEEHAN

Turning people away?

Minneapolis, Minn.

To the Editors: *Commonweal* December 4, 1981, carried an article by John Garvey entitled "Turning People Away: More Fastidious Than Jesus?" In this article, Mr. Garvey protests the pastoral demands made upon persons seeking marriage or baptism in the Catholic

church. "To demand too much clarity of people, too sure a purchase on their motives, may be as wrong in its way as demanding too little is," he suggests.

I have for the last five years served as pastoral minister in an urban parish, with responsibilities for marriage preparation and baptismal instructions. Mr. Garvey is talking about my daily ministry. His comments are a wealth of sentimental confusion regarding the religious practice and community relationship of marginal and/or uncatechized adults.

Mr. Garvey is worried about marginal Catholics; that we ministers of the church are turning people away, "... sever(ing) the last thin connection those people have to Catholicism." I see a lot of these "thin connections" among the poor and among the rich, among the highly educated or barely literate. They sound uncomfortable but definite on the telephone, appear unfamiliar but adamant in the rectory or church office: all we want is a Catholic wedding, all we want is baptism for our little baby here. What is the task of the minister in this situation?

We have a responsibility to respect the integrity of those before us and a responsibility to be honest. May we absolve them of their responsibility for themselves and do for them what "we know is best?" May we withhold from them the meaning of the rituals they are seeking? May we, indeed, treat them as inferiors incapable of faith commitment or community membership and proceed to dispense the sacraments as though we owned them, as placebos or magic or prepackaged social entertainment?

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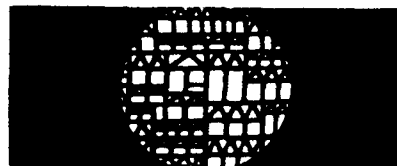
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DIAGNOSIS: LABOR PAINS

ORGANIZED LABOR is in trouble, as made plain in this issue by David Bensman. With the recession getting worse and worse and with unemployment mushrooming, who isn't? But there is more to organized labor's problems than that, and union members know it. That fact was underscored by the strong affirmative vote of the Ford locals of the United Auto Workers to accept increased job security at the price of various givebacks. Even the aggressively muscular Teamsters have accepted a contract that will freeze their wages and benefits for at least two years. Nor are the union troubles confined to a few industries that are suffering from import problems or the economic downturn or both; they go well beyond that.

Take what happened to the United Steelworkers of America recently in its second major effort to organize industrial workers at plants of E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Company, predominantly in the South. Returns tabulated by the National Labor Relations Board showed that the steelworkers' union was beaten badly. Under a labor board ruling sought by Du Pont, employees at each of the fourteen plants involved, from Tennessee to New Jersey, voted on the question of union representation only at their own locations. Union lawyers failed in their effort to have the returns considered in one total figure. But as it turned out, Du Pont's procedural advantage made little difference. At plant after plant across the country, the majority favoring no union or the independent worker associations favored by Du Pont was overwhelming. In one New Jersey plant, for instance, the vote was 165 to 32 against the steelworkers. In Florence, S.C., the vote was 467 for no union and 197 for the union. So it went in plant after plant. Nowhere did the steelworkers win. And to make matters worse, the outlook in the steel industry itself is not bright. For years Big Steel has been pleading for more and more protection against foreign competition, and that pressure on the White House and Congress is getting stronger as it becomes clear that outdated U.S. steelmaking plants cannot compete with more modern and efficient foreign steelmakers. Despite this fact, U.S. Steel came up with \$6.3 billion in its effort to buy the Marathon Oil Company. That sum could have paid for the modernization of U.S. Steel's own facilities in order to make the company truly competitive with foreign manufacturers — and to preserve American steelworkers' jobs. How can the union deal with such corporate conduct?

The organizing squeeze is by no means confined to the United Steelworkers, which is in better shape than many other unions. Organized labor in general lost 54.3 percent of government-supervised elections during the past fiscal year. In elections involving more than 458,000 workers, unions won only 45.7 percent of the 8,198 contests conducted by the NLRB. In fact, this was the sixth consecutive year that unions failed to win 50 percent of the elections. Nor is the problem confined to small and struggling unions; other labor giants besides the Steelworkers are in trouble. The

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pioneering United Auto Workers has obviously fallen on very hard times, as thousands upon thousands of workers have been laid off and U.S. auto sales continue to plummet. The coal miners' union has shrunk dramatically, and more and more coal is coming out of non-union mines, while safety standards continue to decline under the impetus of Washington budget cuts. Membership in the historic International Ladies Garment Workers has dropped more than one-third since 1967. Ronald Reagan succeeded in breaking the air controllers' union, and givebacks of previously won benefits are becoming standard employer demands in industry after industry. Union membership stands at 20.9 percent of America's work force, as against 25.5 in 1953. Labor's heyday is definitely over.

All of this confronts the AFL-CIO's Lane Kirkland, George Meany's successor, with a giant challenge. The AFL-CIO still represents fifteen million workers, and its power is not to be sneezed at. Gains have been made in government and teaching. However, only a small minority of textile, construction, and chemical workers now belong to unions, and the federation seems to have serious trouble in organizing workers in the new high-technology industries — as much trouble as it has in winning recognition for unions in Catholic hospitals, Catholic social teaching or no.

The tide clearly seems to be moving against organized labor, and it is this movement Mr. Kirkland will try to reverse. He must know that it is essential that labor broaden its social vision. Business unionism in this country is a long way from being dead, but business-as-usual unionism is on its way to the undertaker. In his last years George Meany was not particularly flexible or imaginative, and he ran labor affairs with a heavy hand — something much resented by younger men. Mr. Kirkland will have to make a lot of changes if he is to breathe new life into organized labor. What is likely to happen? It is too early to say for sure, but one thing to look for is greater participation in politics and an ever closer relationship with the liberal wing of the Democratic party, accompanied by the emergence of younger and more innovative leaders. Labor is already the major financial resource for the Democrats; this will increase in the months ahead as labor's opposition to Mr. Reagan's policies intensifies even further.

Turning the tide of labor's fortunes will take time, in part because the rank-and-file are not yet ready to consider new approaches, as demonstrated in the widespread initial reluctance to accept even a start at a new beginning in the UAW-General Motors bargaining. Yet virtually every viable alternative to Reagan economic policies involves a greater degree of social planning, of administrative decisions on the use of resources and allocations of investments. Such a shift in economic policy poses the danger of elite or technocratic control, and this danger can best be offset by the participation of a broad-based movement like organized labor in the decision-making — a new role for labor that will require radically different thinking on its part. No doubt unions will continue to suffer hard times until the political-economic climate changes and until their new directions are clear. Nonetheless, employers might be wise to restrain their giveback demands and curb

their anti-union tactics. Poland is not the only country that needs a strong and effective labor movement; organized labor in the United States is not without intellectual resources and imaginative leaders, and it will not be down in the dumps forever. With that in mind U.S. employers, large and small, should remember: if there is one thing the labor movement has, it is a long memory.

SACRIFICIAL PAWNS . . .

Just as we go to press, Nicaragua is reported as having suspended all guarantees of individual rights in response to U.S. "plans of aggression." These ominous developments, about which little has yet been clarified, may eventually overshadow all other reports from Nicaragua. In the meantime, however, we can see how one important Nicaraguan problem has become part of the geopolitical chessgame. President Reagan used his Caribbean Basin speech to flaunt Nicaragua's harsh relocation of 8500 Miskito Indians. Not to be outdone, Secretary Haig flourished a photo of burning bodies — which turned out to date from the Somoza era.

Yes, there's real Indian trouble there. Exiled Indian leaders in Honduras charge the government with militarization of their villages, bombings, and the massacre of some ninety-five Indians. The Sandinistas reply with denials and say that they've got a border war on their hands. The only thing clear at this point is that what was essentially a conflict between federal resource policy and Indian land claims, not an easy matter under the best of circumstances, has become grist for the shouting match of East-West confrontation. And it shouldn't be. Making Indians martyrs of counterrevolution will only turn them into pariahs in their own country.

First the land issue. Indian ethnic identity hinges on rights to communal land — and, as elsewhere, this runs smack into national "development" plans be they of left or right. The 165,000 Miskito, Sumo, and Rama Indians of Nicaragua's isolated Atlantic coast region are mostly devout Moravians suspicious of *any* government sitting in Managua. Their second language is not Spanish, but English; historically, their most recent "benefactors" were U.S. mining and lumber companies, now gone.

After Somoza's ouster, the Indians cautiously embraced the Sandinista government as it gave political recognition to Misurasata, the Indian organization, provided agricultural aid, and a bilingual literacy campaign. Relations took a turn for the worse in August 1980 when the government announced the nationalization of non-arable Indian land. After a protest, that move was postponed until a study of Indian land claims could be made. Meanwhile, as capital fled the region and economic conditions deteriorated, popular support for Misurasata grew — and, whether true or not, the government perceived that Steadman Fagoth and other Misurasata leaders were about to demand *exclusive* rights to what amounts to thirty-eight percent of the nation's territory. Jittery Sandinistas reacted by arresting thirty Misurasata leaders in February of last year. Most were released within two weeks, but the damage was

done. Fearing further repression, some three thousand Miskito fled across the Honduran border.

Mutual mistrust might have been allayed at this point but for two developments: (1) the heating up of border raids by ex-Somoza guardsmen, and (2) that when released in May, Steadman Fagoth also fled to Honduras and joined the Somozists; in fact, by clandestine radio, he regularly urges his fellow Miskitos to rally behind the cause of an imminent invasion. To the government, this has cast doubt on the good faith of other Misurasata leaders. Sandinistas obviously fear that "dirty tricks" will inflame modest Indian resistance into full-scale revolt. The threat of U.S.-sponsored covert operations through surrogate paramilitary groups, now confirmed, lends substance, moreover, to the Sandinist fear of invasion.

And thus we come to the forced relocation of Miskito Indians dwelling along the river Coco bordering Honduras. And the disbanding of Misurasata. The Sandinistas must answer for their harsh measures. International public concern is warranted. But it's difficult to avoid the impression that loose talk and deliberate provocation from Washington have contributed greatly to the antagonism.

For that matter, why single out the Nicaraguans? Or is the president's defense of Indian rights simply under wraps in the rest of Latin America?

Say, in nearby Guatemala, where enterprising generals are clearing the northern jungle province of Peten for oil and nickel exploration. So far, it's driven 70,000, mostly Indian refugees, into Mexico with no end of horror stories.

Or try Colombia, perhaps the worst offender of Indian human rights in the subcontinent. Amnesty International has documented hundreds of assassinations, massive political arrests, torture, and persecution of the Katio and others there.

In Brazil, Chile, and Peru, the situation is a little more subtle. Official policies of ethnicide are called "emancipation" or "incorporation into the market economy." In each case, it's a grand design in the name of "development" (for some) to defraud Indians of communal lands, deprive them of the minimal legal protection they once had and reduce them to peonage. Ecuador alone is an exception to this rule.

In short, throughout Latin America, a crude, blindly expansionist developmentalism threatens to turn Indian cultures into dead specimens for the Metropolitan Museum's display of "primitive art." At just the time when a growing number of U.S. citizens have realized that an artifact is no substitute for a living Indian culture.

A DIFFERENT LAW?

The phone call was from an old friend who works in one of Manhattan's sleeker towers. Had we read, he wanted to know, the news story about Citicorp and the Securities and Exchange Commission?

Well, yes, we had . . . or rather, no, we hadn't. That is, we had *started* the story. We had read that the enforcement staff of the SEC, after a three-year investigation, had concluded that Citicorp, America's second largest bank holding company,

had been shifting currency around the world in illegal ways so as to avoid paying the proper taxes on \$46 million or more in profits. We had read that the staff believed this was done with the knowledge and connivance of Citicorp's senior management. And we had read that, despite these findings, the top officials of the SEC had decided to take no further action in the case. All this was on page one.

If we had shied from pursuing the story into the bowels of the business section, perhaps it was only the numbing effect of certain detailed explanations. "If, for instance, the bank's branch in London sold West German marks at an artificially low rate to a Bahamas branch, the effect would be. . . ."

This is not the kind of thing that daunts our friend, however. Every morning before coffee break, he moves around a few million dollars, taking advantage of decimal points. "Read the continuation," he advised us conspiratorially. "I've been pondering it all morning."

We've been pondering the whole story ourselves for several weeks now. If the SEC staff memorandum is accurate, then Citicorp began contriving artificial sales and shifts of currencies in the early seventies to avoid paying taxes in various European nations. In 1975, its top officials approved a system of keeping two sets of books and conducting unrecorded or disguised transactions so as to hide the real character and extent of its currency dealings from government authorities. And when a tip of the iceberg was exposed by a Citibank employee in 1977, the bank engaged in an extensive cover-up, altering documents and, two years later, retroactively changing its books for 1976 and 1977. The overly scrupulous employee was fired.

But we may never know whether the SEC staff memorandum is, in fact, accurate. That would require a formal SEC public proceeding and perhaps further legal action. Which is what the top SEC officials have vetoed.

It is the reasoning offered by these officials, at least as expressed in leaked reports, that set our friend to pondering. "These officials," read the *New York Times* story, "did not dispute the evidence presented by the enforcement staff, but described the violations as insignificant and harmless."

"Further, they contended, because Citicorp had never represented to stockholders or investors that its senior management had 'honesty and integrity,' it had no legal duty to disclose breaches of these norms."

"These SEC officials also argued, according to documents used by the commission, that Citicorp's pursuit of profits it knew to be probably unlawful was 'reasonable and standard business judgment.'"

Read those last two paragraphs again.

There is a somewhat shopworn tradition of intellectuals' waxing censorious at the ethics of big business. But remember, those paragraphs were written by ostensible defenders, not critics, of corporate behavior. They state baldly what seems to be an operating principle throughout this whole affair: that a different law should obtain for big corporations than for the rest of us. This is "hardball." You're expected to get away with whatever you can. Citicorp's maneuvers were

“old” (1973-1980); they were “insignificant” (several millions in tax dollars); they didn’t harm stockholders (but presumably someone shouldered the tax burden Citicorp avoided); violating tax and exchange laws doesn’t necessarily make “a bad corporation,”; shareholders and potential investors shouldn’t suffer the effects of public disclosure merely to prevent future wrongdoing. Tell all that to the IRS when it investigates *your* tax returns.

By the way, Citicorp paid no federal income taxes last year.

MISCELLANEOUS

One theory around Washington is that the captured Nicaraguans who keep embarrassing the U.S. State Department are actually lost members of the notorious Libyan hit squad.

Report from Venezuela

F-16s FOR CARACAS

TRIGGERING A LATIN ARMS RACE

LATIN AMERICA has traditionally been spared the heightened competition for modern weapon systems which afflicts other regions of the world. The prevalence of military dictatorships coupled with the aggressive role played by European and Israeli arms dealers over the last decade has somewhat modified this situation. Now President Reagan’s policy on arms sales threatens to reverse it completely. The sale to Venezuela of F-16 fighter-bombers — the most advanced of their kind in the U.S. arsenal of exports — under the guise of countering Castro-Communist expansionism, may well signal the beginning of a Latin American arms race of major proportions.

Under-Secretary of State James Buckley, when asked by members of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations why Venezuela needed such powerful weapons, bluntly responded “something called Cuba.” From the Venezuelan standpoint, the reasons are much less clear. Those Venezuelans who take the Cuban threat seriously point to Cuba’s backing of Guyana in the long-simmering territorial dispute over the region known as the Esequibo. However, for this moral support to translate itself into military support, Cuba would have to establish a military base in or near the contested area. Castro denies that Cuba maintains a military presence in Guyana and points to outstanding political differences which separate the two governments. More important, the establishment of a Cuban military base in Guyana would be clearly unacceptable to other nations in the hemisphere — Brazil and the United States to name two — and would thus internationalize the conflict. If such an unlikely situation occurred, the relative strength of Venezuelan air power would be a virtually insignificant factor.

It is possible that the Venezuelan military is more preoc-

cupied with Venezuela’s dispute with Colombia over jurisdiction in the allegedly oil-rich Gulf of Venezuela. Venezuela maintains a rough military parity with its more populous neighbor, although such a calculation is based on a number of intangible factors. The most important of these is Venezuela’s vulnerability due to the location of its oil reserves in the Lake Maracaibo region near the Colombian border. If a balance of power is being maintained, it would certainly be upset by Venezuela’s purchase of the F-16s. Indeed, the Colombian Ministry of Defense has expressed concern regarding the proposed acquisition (the government of Guyana has denounced it in even sharper terms) and has announced its intentions to seek sophisticated military aircraft of its own.

In spite of twenty-three years of democracy and relative stability, military policy is treated with kid gloves by politicians of all persuasions in Venezuela. The major opposition party has not taken an official position on the F-16 purchase. The parties of the opposition have called on the government to provide them with the necessary technical military information in order for them to do so. In private, many leaders have posed weighty questions concerning the purchase. Why has the government decided to acquire as many as twenty-four F-16s? Are the key features of the F-16 — specifically its much boasted versatility — in line with Venezuela’s military needs? Will the Venezuelan Air Force be able to assimilate all the necessary technology? And why did the Armed Forces choose the \$14.5 million F-16 bomber over the more economical French Mirage which many top officers preferred? The type of technical information necessary to answer this kind of question has always been jealously guarded by the Venezuelan military. The only politicians with access to classified military knowledge are those of the two main establishment parties which have exclusive voting representation on the Senate’s Defense Committee.

In Venezuela, not even the leftists question the military’s need to renovate its equipment periodically, and such a changeover is presently overdue. Unlike in the guerrilla war-torn 1960s, the leftists recognize the importance of maintaining a modern efficient armed force in order to defend the nation’s oil wealth. Indeed, ex-presidential candidate Americo Martin, a moderate socialist, told this author that the F-16s may be necessary as a counterpoise to Brazilian expansion.

No nation would benefit from a regional arms race triggered by the F-16 sales, but the big loser would be Venezuela. Venezuela has attempted to cultivate the image of a “responsible third-world nation” and has been generous with its oil money in order to enhance OPEC’s and its own reputation in that part of the world. This effort will be in vain should it appear that Venezuela is parlaying petrodollars into military might to be flexed against neighboring countries.

The Reagan administration’s policy of rewarding friendly nations by selling them advanced hardware is full of pitfalls. It is especially ill-advised in the case of Latin America. Up until now, F-16s have been sold to nations in high-tension areas, specifically to Israel and various NATO countries. Venezuela,

unlike Israel, enjoys the hemispheric protective umbrella of the United States and thus does not require ultra-modern military equipment. The sale of F-16s to Venezuela will reverse a long-standing U.S. policy against the introduction of sophisticated weaponry to Latin America. If the United States is as

serious about helping out its friends, it should refrain from pushing them into an arms race, which, as history tells us time and again, no country really ever wins. STEVE ELLNER

(Steve Ellner, a previous contributor, teaches at the Universidad de Oriente, Venezuela.)

Of several minds: *Abigail McCarthy*

LUST & MONEY THE NEWEST PORNOGRAPHY

WRITING has been a fruitful occupation for many women, and women who write abound in Washington. Included are some congressional wives who have had really significant success in the field. Among them are June Bingham, wife of the New York representative, who was the author of biographies of U Thant, former head of the United Nations, and of theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, and Marilyn Scharp, wife of the Indiana representative, who wrote *Sunflower* and other thrillers. These two and several others have formed a group who regularly meet over a brown bag lunch and compare notes.

I was invited to join them recently when a New York publisher came down to talk with them about what is happening in the publishing world. What is happening there is, of course, of concern to all of us, whether we are writers or not. The effect of that world on American sensibilities and the formation of American attitudes can hardly be underestimated. The news is not especially good.

The future of fiction is especially bleak. There are few publishing houses today willing to nurture young writers and bring them along because so many publishing houses have been gobbled up by conglomerates whose executives are interested only in the "bottom line." Writers, old or young, who work on books which do not conform to current best seller formulas, have less and less chance of publication. The literary editors who once served writers as faithful mentors, book after book, are no longer identified with this publishing house or that. Loyalty and longevity on

the staff of a particular house were casualties of the new arrangements. Editors now move from house to house in search of better jobs. The selling of books is now in the hands of giant chains — again run by people interested not in stocking bookstores for browsing, but for quick turnover.

During his gloomy discourse the young publisher dropped, however, some incidental nuggets of fascinating, if unrelated, information. One of them was a minor bombshell. *Sex*, he said, no longer sells books. He cited the most recent James Bond book as an example. He says "sex was there" — but the publishers were counting upon gimmickry and gadgetry to sell this new Bond. There would, he thought, still be books specializing in sex as the basis of their appeal but, in general, the public seemed to be sated with it. Writers would have to depend on something more to sell their books.

This should be welcome news. (It should be especially good news to those priest novelists who have, of late, set their celibate imaginations to what must be the unwelcome task of creating sex scenes so that their novels will truly reflect life! And I should think readers would be relieved at not having to plough through some of the labored and fevered scenes which have resulted.) If books reflect the age, it is good to know that the obsession with sex that has marked our time is on the wane. But, is another obsession taking its place? It seems so.

Think of some of the bestsellers of recent years. *A Woman of Property*, *A Woman of Substance*, *Merger*, *Noble*

House, the block-busting novel by Clavell. The overriding subject is *money* — how to get it, how to manipulate its institutions, how to make it grow, how to use it as an evergrowing source of power. Surely this is a reflection of the growing influence of greed as a motivating force in our society.

Whatever one may think of David Stockman, his description of lobbyists and advocates for special interest groups converging on the capitol in an exhibition of unbridled greed, like pigs to a trough, touched a nerve in all of us. "Money as money has no value except in its use," says the old Catholic Dictionary. When we seek money solely to accumulate it, when money is used merely to breed more money, then the ancient sin of usury is rampant in the land.

Social observers have been pointing out that our permissive society has brought about a phenomenon variously described as "the cool beyond sex" and "the chastity of boredom." Now, it would seem, this condition is so widespread as to have affected the readership of fiction. The obsession with money may well run the same course, but what will happen to our society in the meantime? In our foundering economy the question answers itself. No nation can consider its affairs sound when its money is not put to use — to renew its industry, to produce goods for its people.

Dante, in the *Inferno*, vividly and picturesquely reminds us of the gradation of sins in the sight of God. Paola and Francesca, whose sin was sexual, who preferred a human love to love of God and his law, float like autumn leaves on the wind on the outer rim of hell, but the grisly depths are reserved for those who preferred material goods to the All-Good. The love of money is far worse than the love of the flesh.

As the righteous set about combing school libraries for books to ban, they might well give some thought to books about money. ABIGAIL MCCARTHY

ONE OF PAUL VI's many contributions to the social ministry of the Catholic church was the initiation of the World Day of Peace. Designated as January 1, the observance is marked annually by a special liturgy and publication of the Pope's Day of Peace Message. John Paul II has continued the tradition, and released in late December his third Day of Peace Message. These papal messages have typically not received widespread visibility in the secular media, but this year the Polish crisis attuned the press to every remark of the pope on world events. While the statement was released right after martial law was declared, it would distort both the significance and the substance of the message to read it exclusively in light of events in Poland. The 1982 Day of Peace Message makes a major contribution to contemporary Catholic teaching on war and peace. Four themes highlight the point.

First, while John Paul II has addressed the general problem of violence and war on several occasions, this statement is the first time he has explicitly affirmed the right of legitimate self-defense: "This is why Christians, even as they strive to resist and prevent every form of warfare have no hesitation in recalling that, in the name of an elementary requirement of justice, peoples have a right and even a duty to protect their existence and freedom by proportionate means against an unjust aggressor." The significance of this affirmation has to be judged in light of the delicately balanced moral teaching on war which has marked papal statements since John XXIII's *Peace on Earth* (1963).

The primary thrust since 1963 has been to place the voice of the church squarely on the side of peace advocacy, to argue against the use of force, to cite its destructive character and its inability to resolve conflicted political issues in a fundamental way. John Paul II in his address in Latin America and in Ireland, as well as in this 1982 Message, forcefully continued this theme.

A subordinate but consistent second

Church/world watch

The pope's delicate balance

J. Bryan Hehir

theme in the papal teaching has been to affirm the right of states and peoples, as a last resort, to acts of legitimate self-defense. This principle is found in the teaching of Paul VI and Vatican II and has now been reasserted by John Paul II. The delicate balance of peace advocacy in a conflicted world has been reaffirmed.

Second, the 1982 Day of Peace Message illustrates the strain under which the delicate balance is maintained. The strain arises from the character of modern war, particularly nuclear war. The exercise of self-defense is limited by John Paul's observation that: "in view of the difference between classical warfare and nuclear or bacteriological wars — a difference so to speak of nature — and in view of the scandal of the arms race seen against the background of the needs of the Third World, this right, which is very real in principle, only underlines the urgency for world society to equip itself with effective means of negotiation." Much will be made of the pope's reference to the right of self-defense; no less important is his reference to the qualitatively new problem posed by nuclear war.

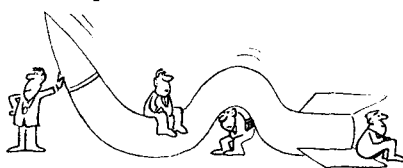
Third, the style of the 1982 Message shows an important connection with other aspects of John Paul's social

teaching. The common characteristic lies in the connection he draws between theological anthropology and moral theology. Briefly put, our moral conclusions should flow from a comprehensive view of the human person. In the pope's words, "When we consider the question of peace, we are led to consider the meaning and conditions of our personal and community lives." This style of moral analysis, from anthropology to ethics, has a long history in the study of warfare. Augustine in the fifth century and Reinhold Niebuhr in the twentieth both employed it. The rationale of the linkage of anthropology and ethics is that resort to force is both a sign of the sinful human condition and a tragically necessary response to sin. Both the rationale and the moral rule of this position — legitimation of some uses of force — have come under increasing criticism from theologians and activists.

Both find the Augustinian position a weakening of the evangelical ethic on war. The pope's statement of the case will surely catalyze more debate in the Catholic community.

Fourth, a particularly relevant theme for Catholics living in a democracy is the Holy Father's emphasis on the role of public opinion as a force for peace. The key phrase: "Rulers must be supported and enlightened by a public opinion that encourages them or, where necessary, expresses disapproval." The phrase is a reminder that political decisions are made in an atmosphere which shapes their content even if it does not determine their conclusions. The church's unique capability in a democracy is its ability to engage the public debate about major moral issues. In a day when vast increases for the military budget move from executive proposals through the legislative process with little or no resistance, the issue of public opinion needs careful consideration. The 1982 Day of Peace Message moves us to this consideration by challenging the way we think and act on war and peace.

J. BRYAN HEHIR



The political dimension of Christian love



March 24 is the second anniversary of the assassination of Oscar Romero, Archbishop of San Salvador, shot down while he was offering Mass. To commemorate that date and to show the reasoning that eventually led to his martyrdom, we publish below the bulk of an address by Archbishop Romero, delivered when he received an honorary degree from the University of Louvain. This address in its entirety will be included in a forthcoming collection of Archbishop Romero's writings to be published by Orbis Books.

THE EDITORS

OSCAR ROMERO

I COME from the smallest country in faraway Latin America. I will not try to speak, and you cannot expect me to speak, the way an expert in politics might. Nor will I even speculate, as someone might who was an expert, on the theoretical relationship between the faith and politics. No, I am going to speak simply, as a pastor, as one who, together with his people, has been learning the beautiful but harsh truth that the Christian faith does not cut us off from the world but immerses us in it, that the church is not a fortress set apart from the city but is a follower of that Jesus who lived, worked, battled, and died in the midst of a city, in a "polis." It is in this sense that I would like to talk about the political dimension of the Christian faith: in the precise sense of the repercussions of the faith for the world and also of the repercussions that insertion in the world has for the faith.

We ought to be clear from the start that the Christian faith and the action of the church have always had socio-political repercussions. By action or omission, by associating themselves with one or other social group, Christians have always had an influence upon the socio-political make-up of the world in which they live. The problem is about the "how" of this influence in the socio-political world, so that it may be truly in accordance with the faith.

As a first idea, though still a very general one, I want to propose Vatican II's intuition, which lies at the root of every ecclesial movement of today. The essence of the church lies in its mission of service to the world, in its mission of saving the

world in its totality, and of saving it in history, here and now. The church exists to act in solidarity with the hopes and with the joys, with the anxieties and with the sorrows, of men and women. Like Jesus, the church was sent "to bring good news to the poor, to heal the contrite of heart, to seek and to save what was lost" (*Lumen Gentium*, 8).

You all know these words of the Council. My contribution will be to put real flesh upon those beautiful declarations from the standpoint of my own situation, of a small Latin American country, typical of what today is called the third world. To put it in one word, in a word which sums it all up and makes it concrete, the world which the church ought to serve is, for us, the world of the poor.

OUR SALVADORAN WORLD is no abstraction. It is not yet another example of what is understood by "world" in developed countries. It is a world made up, in much the greater part, of men and women who are poor and oppressed. And we say of that world of the poor that it is the key to understanding the Christian faith, to understanding the action of the church and the political dimension of that faith and of that ecclesial action. It is the poor who tell us what the world is, and what the church's service to the world is. It is the poor who tell us what the "polis" is, what the city is and what it means for the church really to live in that world. In its apostolic work our archdiocese has recently been moving in a direction which can only be described, and only be understood, as a turning towards the world of the poor, to their real, concrete world.

Just as elsewhere in Latin America, the words of Exodus have, after many years — perhaps after centuries — resounded in our ears: "The cry of the sons of Israel has come to me, and I have witnessed the way in which the Egyptians oppress them" (Ex 3:9). These words have given us new eyes to see what has always been the case among us, but which has so often been hidden, even from the view of the church itself. We have learned to see what is the first, basic fact about our world and, as pastors, we have made a judgment about it at Medellín and at Puebla. "That misery, as a collective fact, expresses itself as an injustice which cries to the heavens" (Medellín, *Justice*,

26 March 1982: 169

1). At Puebla we declared, "So we brand the situation of inhuman poverty in which millions of Latin Americans live as the most devastating and humiliating kind of scourge. And this situation finds expression in such things as a high rate of infant mortality, lack of adequate housing, health problems, starvation wages, unemployment and underemployment, malnutrition, job uncertainty, compulsory mass migrations, etc." (Final document, 29).

The experience of these realities, and letting ourselves be affected by them, far from separating us from our faith has sent us back to the world of the poor as to our true home. It has moved us, as a first, basic step, to take the world of the poor upon ourselves. It is there that we have found the real faces of the poor. There we have met peasants without land, and without stable employment, without water or electricity in their poor houses, without medical assistance when mothers give birth, and without schools when the children begin to grow up. There we have met workers who have no labor rights, and who are discharged from their factories if they demand such rights, people who are at the mercy of cold economic calculations. There we have met the mothers and the wives of those who have disappeared, or who are political prisoners. There we have met the shantytown dwellers, whose wretchedness defies imagination, living out a constant insult from the mansions which are next door.

It is within this world which lacks a human face, this contemporary sacrament of the suffering servant of Yahweh, that the church of my archdiocese has undertaken to incarnate itself. I do not say this in a triumphalist spirit, for I am well aware how much in this regard remains to be done. But I say it with immense joy, for we have made the effort not to pass by afar off, not to circle round the one lying wounded in the roadway, but to approach him or her like the good Samaritan.

This coming closer to the world of the poor is what we understand both by the incarnation and by conversion. The changes which were needed within the church and in its apostolate, in education, in religious and in priestly life, in lay movements, which we have not brought about simply by looking inwards upon the church, we are now carrying out by turning ourselves outwards towards the world of the poor.

The hope which our church encourages is not naive, nor is it passive. It is rather a summons . . . for the great majority of people, the poor, that they assume their proper responsibility . . . that, in a country where it is legally or practically prohibited, they set about organizing themselves.

THIS ENCOUNTER with the poor has regained for us the central truth of the Gospel, through which the word of God urges us to conversion. The church has to proclaim the Good News to the poor. Those who, in this-worldly terms, have heard bad news, and who have lived out even worse realities, are now listening through the church to the word of Jesus: "The Kingdom of God is at hand," "Blessed are you who are poor, for the Kingdom of God is yours." And hence they also have a Good News to proclaim to the rich: that they, too, become poor in order to share the benefits of the Kingdom with the poor.

It is something new among our people that today the poor see in the church a source of hope and a support for their noble struggle for liberation. The hope which our church encourages is not naive, nor is it passive. It is rather a summons from the word of God for the great majority of people, the poor, that they assume their proper responsibility, that they raise their consciousness, that, in a country where it is legally or practically prohibited they set about organizing themselves. And it is backing, sometimes critical backing, for their just causes and demands. The hope that we preach to the poor is intended to give them back their dignity, to encourage them to take charge of their own future. The church has turned towards the poor; indeed, it has made of the poor the special beneficiaries of its mission because, as Puebla says, "God takes on their defense and loves them" (n. 1142).

The majority of the poor in our country are oppressed and repressed daily by the economic and political structures. Those terrible words spoken by the prophets of Israel continue to be true among us. Among us there are those who sell the just man for money, and the poor man for a pair of sandals; those who, in their mansions, practice violence and pile up plunder; those who crush the poor; those who make the kingdom of violence come closer while they lie upon their beds of ivory; those who join house to house, and annex field to field, until they occupy the whole of the land, and remain alone in the country.

These texts from the prophets Amos and Isaiah are not just voices from distant centuries; they are not merely texts which we reverently read in the liturgy. They are every-day realities. Day by day we live out their cruelty and intensity. We live them out when there come to us the mothers and the wives of those who have been arrested or who have disappeared, when mutilated bodies turn up in secret cemeteries, when those who fight for justice and peace are assassinated. In this situation of conflict and antagonism, in which just a few people control the economic and the political power, the church has placed itself at the side of the poor, and has undertaken their defense. The church cannot do otherwise, for it remembers that Jesus had pity on the multitude. But by doing so it has entered into serious conflict with the powerful people who belong to the economic oligarchies, and with the political and military authorities of the state.

THIS DEFENSE of the poor in a world deep in conflict has occasioned something which is new in the recent history of our church: persecution. In less than three

To give life to the poor one has to give of one's own life; even to give one's life itself. Many Salvadorans, many Christians, are ready. . . .

years over fifty priests have been attacked, threatened, calumniated. Six are already martyrs — they have been murdered; several have been tortured and others expelled. Nuns have also been the objects of persecution. The radio of the archdiocese and educational institutions which are Catholic or of a Christian inspiration have been constantly threatened, intimidated, attacked, including by bombs. Several parish communities have been raided.

If all this has happened to people who are the most conspicuous representatives of the church, you can guess what has happened to ordinary Christian people, to the peasants, the catechists, the delegates of the word, to the basic ecclesial communities. There have been threats, arrests, tortures, murders, numbering hundreds and thousands. As always, even in the persecution it has been the poor among the Christians who have suffered most.

It is, then, an indisputable fact that, over the last three years, our church has been persecuted. But it is important to note why it has been persecuted. Not any and every priest has been persecuted, not any and every institution has been attacked. That part of the church has been attacked and persecuted which has placed itself at the side of the people, and has gone to their defense. Here again we find the key to understanding the persecution of the church: the poor. Once again it is the poor who bring us to understand what has really happened. Persecution has been occasioned by the defense of the poor. It amounts to nothing other than the church taking upon itself the destiny of the poor.

Persecution has been directed against the poor, who today are the body of Christ in history. They, like Jesus, are the crucified people, the persecuted people like the servant of Yahweh. They are the ones who make up in their own bodies that which is lacking in the passion of Christ. And for that reason when the church has organized and united itself around the hopes and the anxieties of the poor it has incurred the same fate as that of Jesus and of the poor: persecution.

The political dimension of the faith is nothing other than the church's response to the demands made upon it by the real socio-political world in which it exists. What we have rediscovered is that this demand is a fundamental one for the faith, and that the church cannot ignore it. That is not to say that the church should regard itself as a political institution entering into competition with other political institutions, or that it has its own political processes. Nor, much less, is it to say that the

church desires political leadership. No, one is talking of something more profound, something more in keeping with the Gospel; one is talking of an authentic option for the poor, of becoming incarnate in their world, of proclaiming the Good News to them, of giving them hope, of encouraging them to engage in a liberating praxis, of defending their cause and of sharing in their fate.

Because the church has opted for the real, and not for the fictitious, poor, because it has opted for those who really are oppressed and repressed, the church lives in a political world, and it fulfills itself as church also through politics. It cannot be otherwise if the church, like Jesus, is to turn itself towards the poor.

THE ACTION of our Archdiocese has clearly started out from its conviction about the faith. The transcendence of the Gospel has guided us in our judgment and in our action. We have judged the social and political situation from the standpoint of the faith. But it is also true, to look at it another way, that the faith itself has been deepened, precisely by taking up this stance towards the socio-political reality around us.

In the first place, we have a better knowledge of what sin is. We know that the death of an individual is an offense against God. We know that such a sin really is mortal, not only in the sense of the interior death of the person who commits the sin, but also because of the real, objective death the sin produces. Let us in this way remind ourselves of the fundamental fact of our Christian faith: sin killed the Son of God, and sin is what goes on killing the children of God.

We see that basic truth of the Christian faith daily in our country. It is impossible to offend God without offending one's brother or sister. And the worst offense against God, the worst form of secularism, as one of our theologians has said, is "to turn children of God, temples of the Holy Spirit, the body of Christ in history, into victims of oppression and of injustice, into slaves to economic greed, into fodder for political repression. The worst of these forms of secularism is the denial of grace through sin, turning this world into a presence through which the powers of evil operate, the visible presence of the denial of God."

It is not a matter of sheer routine that we insist once again on the existence in our country of structures of sin. They are sin because they produce the fruits of sin: the deaths of Salvadorans—the swift death brought by repression or the long-drawn out, but no less real, death from structural oppression. That is why we have denounced what in our country has become the idolatry of wealth, of the absolute right, within the capitalist system, of private property, of political power in national security regimes, in the name of which the insecurity of the individual is itself institutionalized. No matter how tragic it may appear, the church through its entrance into the real socio-political world has learned how to recognize, and how to deepen its understanding of, the essence of sin. The fundamental essence of sin is, in this world, revealed as the death of Salvadorans.

In the second place we now have a better understanding of what the incarnation means, what it means to say that Jesus really took human flesh and made himself one with his brothers and sisters in suffering, in the tears and the laments, in the act of surrender. We know that we are not directly treating of a universal incarnation. That is impossible. We are speaking of an incarnation which is biased and partial: incarnation in the world of the poor. From that perspective the church will become a church for everybody. It will offer a service to the powerful, too, through the apostolate of conversion—but not the other way round, as has happened so often.

The world of the poor, with its very concrete social and political characteristics, teaches us where the church can incarnate itself in such a way that it will avoid the false universalism which ends up with the church associating itself with the powerful ones. The world of the poor teaches us what the nature of Christian love is, a love which certainly seeks peace but which unmasks false pacifism—the pacifism of resignation and inactivity. It is a love which should be freely offered, but it is one which ought to seek to be effective in history.

The world of the poor teaches us that the sublimity of Christian love ought to be mediated through the overriding necessity of justice for the majority. It ought not to flee from honorable conflict. The world of the poor teaches us that liberation will arrive only when the poor are not simply on the receiving end of hand-outs from governments or from the church, but when they themselves are the controllers of, and protagonists in, their own struggle and liberation, thereby unmasking the root of false paternalism, even ecclesiastical paternalism.

The real world of the poor also teaches us what one is talking about when speaking of Christian hope. The church preaches a new heaven and a new earth. It knows, moreover, that no set of socio-political structures can be equated with the final fullness which is given by God. But it has also learnt that transcendent hope ought to be preserved by signs of hope in history, no matter how simple they may apparently be — such as those proclaimed by Isaiah when he says, “They will build houses and inhabit them, plant vineyards and eat their fruit” (Is. 65:21). What in this is an authentically Christian hope — not reduced, as is so often said disparagingly, to what is merely of this world or purely human — is being learnt daily through contact with those who have no houses and no vineyards, those who build for others to inhabit and work so that others may eat the fruits.

In the third place, incarnation in the socio-political world deepens faith in God and in his Christ. We believe in Jesus who came to bring the fullness of life, and we believe in a living God who gives life to men and women, and wants them truly to live. Those radical truths of the faith become really true and truly radical when the church enters into the midst of the life and death of its people. Then there is put before the church, as it is put before every individual, faith’s most fundamental choice: to be in favor of life, or to be in favor of death. We see, with great clarity, that here neutrality is impossible. Either we serve the life of Salvadorans, or we are accomplices in their

death. And here what is most fundamental about the faith is given expression in history: either we believe in a God of life, or we serve the idols of death.

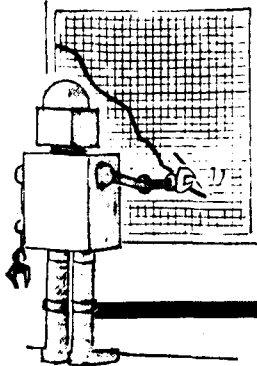
In the name of Jesus we want, and we work for, life in its fullness, a life which is not limited to the satisfaction of the basic material needs, nor one which is reduced to the sphere of the socio-political. We know perfectly well that the fullness of life is to be achieved finally only in the Kingdom of the Father, and in history this fullness is achieved through a worthy service of that Kingdom, and total surrender to the Father. But we see with equal clarity that in the name of Jesus it would be a sheer illusion, it would be an irony, and, at bottom, it would be the most profound blasphemy, to forget and to ignore the basic levels of life, the life which begins with bread, a roof, work.

With the Apostle John we believe that Jesus is “the Word who is Life” and that God reveals himself wherever this life is to be found. Where the poor begin to live, where the poor begin to free themselves, where people are able to sit around a common table to share with one another, the God of life is there. When the church inserts itself into the socio-political world it does so in order to work with it so that from this cooperation life for the poor may arise. In doing so, therefore, it is not distancing itself from its mission, nor is it doing something of secondary importance or additional to its mission. It is giving testimony to its faith in God, it is being the instrument of the Spirit, the Lord and giver of life.

THIS FAITH in the God of life is the explanation for what lies deepest in the Christian mystery. To give life to the poor one has to give of one’s own life, even to give one’s life itself. Indeed, the greatest sign of faith in a God of life is the witness of one who is ready to give his own life. “A man can have no greater love than to lay down his life for his friends” (Jn 15:13). And we see this daily in our country. Many Salvadorans, many Christians, are ready to give their lives so that the poor may have life. They are following Jesus, and showing their faith in him. Entered into the real world just as Jesus did, like him accused and threatened, like him laying down their lives, they are giving witness to the Word of Life.

Our story, then, is a very old one. It is Jesus’s story that, in all modesty, we are trying to follow. As church, we are no political experts, nor do we want to manipulate politics through its own internal mechanisms. But entrance into the socio-political world, into the world where the lives and deaths of the great mass of the population are decided upon, is necessary and is urgent if we are to preserve, not only in word but in deed, faith in a God of life, and the following of Jesus.

Early Christians used to say “Gloria Dei, vivens homo” (the glory of God is the person who lives). We could make this more concrete by saying “Gloria Dei, vivens pauper” (the glory of God is the poor person who lives). From the perspective of the transcendence of the Gospel we believe we can determine what this life of the poor truly is; and we also think that by putting ourselves alongside the poor and trying to bring life to them we will come to know what is the eternal truth of the Gospel.



Labor's painful dilemma

DAVID BENSMAN

IT IS THE AFTERNOON of January 23, 1982, several hours before the first round of talks between the United Auto Workers and General Motors break off. Local 595 headquarters are on Route 1, down the road from GM's mammoth assembly plant, in the midst of New Jersey's industrial heartland. Up the stairs are local leaders' offices, and a meeting hall lined with barbells and exercise bikes; downstairs is a full-sized bar.

At the bar, Carl Bradshaw, a young union activist, is reflecting on the GM Bargaining Council's narrow vote to continue negotiations with General Motors. Carl is angry; not only did GM lay off indefinitely 1200 of Linden's 6000 production workers in November, it also closed the plant for a week after Christmas. Carl doesn't believe the company did this to run down inventory, for the big Buicks and Cadillacs produced in Linden are selling. Carl thinks the plant was shut down to soften the members up for the vote on concessions.

And Carl doesn't believe GM needs concessions; it turned a \$700 million loss in 1980 to a \$300 million profit in 1981. Besides, Carl thinks, "Concessions are destructive to us. GM will use the money we give them to expand their foreign operations. We'd be digging our own graves."

Nevertheless, Carl hopes there will be an agreement. "It's imperative that we settle now. We would have to eat more shit in September. If we strike in September, and come back with a bad contract, there would be a long, nasty deterioration of the union, a very bad thing. The troops aren't ready to fight. Most of the young people don't want to make concessions, but I don't know if they'll strike. They don't know what the union has gotten for them. The other day, I talked to one guy who said he wasn't sure if wages would really be lower if GM was non-union! They're so alienated, from the company — and from the union."

Carl isn't sure that there will be a strike; but he's afraid GM might force one. "The union is too weak," he adds. "The International leadership is out of touch with the rank-and-file." When I ask Carl how this came about, he answers, "The International union has not fostered, and it has not allowed, the type of secondary leadership you'd need to conduct a long strike against GM under the current conditions."

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And yet, if you ask Carl what signs of hope he sees, he points to the UAW leadership. Carl had just attended the national council meeting of the Community Action Program (CAP), where the leadership outlined plans to lobby Congress for a law requiring automakers who sell cars in the United States to manufacture or buy their parts here as well. The proposal got a big response, and Carl senses that local presidents will be more aggressive than usual when they talk to politicians about the bill.

Carl is caught in a painful dilemma, a dilemma shared by hundreds of thousands of trade unionists. They must find ways to cope not only with the current recession but with the long-term decline in American manufacturing as well. While the weakened unions try to adapt to an economy far different from the one which spawned them and gave them shape, corporate pressure to make concessions spreads through American industry like a cancer.

UNION "givebacks" are not new. Whenever the American economy has plunged into depression, unions have had to accept wage cuts and to loosen their work rules.

The current giveback phenomenon surfaced in 1979, when American industrial production began to slump. The news that Chrysler and the American Bridge division of U.S. Steel had extracted pay cuts from the UAW and Steelworkers was troubling. Then in 1981, it became clear that concessions were on the agenda across a broad spectrum of American industry.

In rubber, the industry's contraction and competition led by France's fiercely anti-union Michelin have put union locals under severe pressure. Threatened with the closing of their plant, members of Local 186 of Firestone in Memphis agreed to work on a seven-day schedule, giving up premium pay for weekend work. And after several Uniroyal locals were forced to make similar givebacks, the United Rubber Workers union agreed in January 1982 to give Uniroyal \$54.9 million in concessions from the contract that will be negotiated with the big tire companies this spring.

Workers in the auto parts supply industry are even more vulnerable. The UAW local at Bellwood, Illinois was whipsawed when Ford informed the Stanodyne Corp. that Eaton, Yale, and Towne had offered to supply parts for less than Stanodyne was charging; Eaton's bid became possible when the Allied Industrial Workers' union local in Saginaw, Michigan had agreed to give up seven cost-of-living (COLA) pay-

ments. When Stanodyne went to the UAW local with the bad news, the union agreed to forego six COLA payments.

Givebacks are not confined to the declining manufacturing sector; they've also spread to the building trades. The proud construction unions are reeling from the onslaught of non-union contractors bidding for industrial and utility projects that once were the unions' domain. *Business Week* reports that labor-management committees in fifteen localities have persuaded unions to reduce their work crews, hold down wages, and avoid strikes. Officials of several unions have formulated work-rule concessions they would make to get union hiring halls used for the large synfuels projects in the Rocky Mountain region. A similar agreement is already in place in the Sunbelt.

The story is equally bleak in transportation. Last August, United Airlines signed a contract with the Airline Pilots Association that traded work rules for job security. The agreement specified that pilots be paid flat monthly salaries instead of hourly rates, and it raised the ceilings on flying hours. In addition, the union agreed to fly 737's with two pilots instead of three. In exchange for these concessions, United agreed not to lay off any pilots beyond the 750 already discharged, nor to set up a low-wage subsidiary.

United's success led the way not only for six other airlines but for the trucking industry. A month after the pilots signed with United, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters reopened its contract three months early. The Teamsters were hurting. One hundred twenty thousand union drivers were out of work. And erosion of the national Master Agreement between the Teamsters and the truckers' association, threatened the union's foundation. Some carriers were refusing to pay cost-of-living increases, while twenty-seven major freight companies had imposed fifteen percent wage reductions. The Teamsters took no action. Instead, on January 14, 1982, they signed a contract freezing wages, reducing cost-of-living increases, and changing work rules so as to make long-distance drivers responsible for delivering shipments to customers, rather than to city transfer points, for final delivery by other drivers. The agreement also cut pensions and the wages paid to drivers hired in the future.

Meanwhile, givebacks develop their own momentum. When the three electrical workers' unions bargain with GE and Westinghouse this spring, the companies will point to concessions at Ford, Uniroyal, and the trucking industry, just as unions used to point to large settlements in other industries to justify their demands.

But negotiators for the electrical workers won't be taken in by this ploy: GE and Westinghouse are not Ford or Chrysler; the electrical appliance industry is not auto. *Business Week* predicts the unions will get "average wage and benefit gains."

Concessions can be extracted only in industries that are being devastated rapidly by such forces as high interest rates (agricultural implements, auto and auto supplies, construction, and retailing) or by government deregulation (in airlines and trucking). In other sectors, the gradual decline of American industry is producing a steadily decreasing standard of

living, job losses, and sporadic plant closings. These are serious problems, but they are distinct from the giveback phenomenon.

The sectoral crises that gave rise to demands for concessions stem from government policies. High interest rates and deregulation are not acts of God, nor structural tendencies of late capitalism, and they are certainly not immutable. They are policy choices made by the Reagan and Carter administrations to fight inflation. And as long as these policies remain, workers at Harvester, Ford, and GM as well as teamsters and building tradesmen, will suffer disproportionately. If a new administration reversed these policies, the special agony of the UAW, IBT, and building trades unions would cease, although we would still face the challenge of reversing the steep decline of American industry.

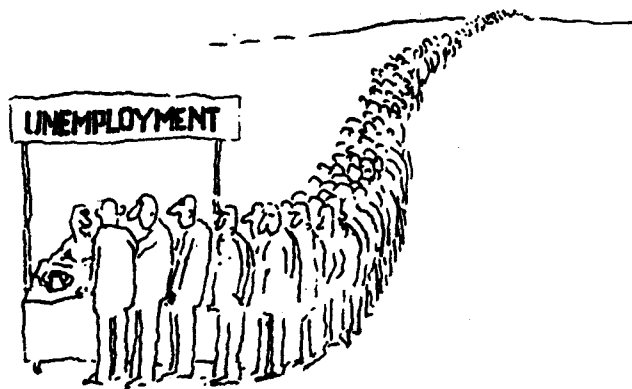
IN THE MEANTIME, Reagan is in the White House, and pressures for concessions are real. How do unions respond to corporate demands for givebacks? Are there alternatives to concessions?

UAW President Douglas Fraser took a gamble when he proposed reopening the General Motors and Ford contracts on December 14, 1981. Local officers had registered their disapproval of reopening the contract in March; afterward, auto sales had slowed to a trickle. Finding a formula that would satisfy both the companies and the membership would not be easy.

But Fraser believed failure to act was unthinkable. If the union waited for its contracts to expire in September, it would have no leverage. During a strike, GM could sell off its inventory while union members walked the picket line. GM could save on wages, benefits, and overhead costs, while auto workers would lose more than \$5 billion in a 4½ month strike. The union could not secure a decent contract under those circumstances.

For the UAW leadership, the issue was tactical. Whether or not GM "needed" or "deserved" concessions was irrelevant. Nor was it important whether or not GM's prices or the UAW's wages were too high. Reopening the contract was a way to buy time until the depression lifted.

Fraser envisioned a temporary agreement that would protect his members' jobs at GM for eighteen months. In return, the UAW would make concessions worth \$4800 per worker. The main points of the agreement were to be:



- Closing plants and “outsourcing” — buying parts overseas or from other companies — would be restricted during the agreement.

- All the savings in labor costs would be passed on to consumers. This would be verified by accountants selected by the UAW.

- All the unionists’ sacrifices would be matched by GM’s salaried employees, while reductions in supervisory ranks would reflect recent layoffs of production workers.

- Car dealers would have to reorder one car for every car they sold.

- If car sales picked up, the UAW could reopen the contract.

- The union would give back one week paid vacation, nine paid personal days, one bonus Sunday, and the three percent wage increase due in September 1982. But before the temporary agreement expired, all benefits and wages would return to the level they would have reached had there been no contract reopening.

This package would have reduced GM’s labor costs by \$240 per car. Adding in reductions in white collar pay and the dealers’ take increases that figure to \$450. According to union economists, that would have enabled GM to boost its sales by four percent, which might bring back 15,000 workers from layoffs.

GM never agreed to this proposal, and there is no way to tell if it ever would have accepted such modest reductions in labor costs. Nor is there any way of knowing whether the UAW membership would have approved the concessions. At the Washington meeting of the UAW’s Bargaining Council, dissident unionists obtained a roll-call vote on whether to continue the talks with GM. Forty-three percent of the delegates voted to break off the talks. Among those who voted “no” were officials belonging to the leadership team. Their votes showed that opposition to concessions was deep and widespread. GM retreated. On January 28, the company withdrew its proposals on outsourcing. The talks were dead.

What happened in Washington was extraordinary. For thirty-five years the International leadership had ruled the union completely and democratically. The leadership of Walter Reuther and his successors had taken the UAW into and out of and back into the AFL-CIO, had persuaded a conservative membership to back a social democratic political program, and had combated George Wallace. It had pioneered on such bargaining issues as long-term contracts, health insurance, and supplemental unemployment benefits. And wherever the leadership ventured, the secondary leadership could be found, bringing the members along. But on January 23 the troops did not follow. Why this happened illustrates how the giveback phenomenon poses new and crucial challenges for the labor movement.

President Fraser’s plan ran into immediate trouble. Unexpected opposition surfaced at the regional meetings in December. During the month that followed, while President Fraser visited Australia, International staffers and representatives trying to round up support met stiff resistance. “Fraser is

great with the men, but I don’t see how he can get the talks opened,” confided one International representative who’s been with the union for thirty-five years. Fraser won approval from the Bargaining Councils on January 14, but the forty percent “no” vote at General Motors suggested that a hard road lay ahead.

The next day, leaders of the Independent Skilled Trades Council (ISTC) organized Locals Opposed to Concessions to combat the Fraser proposal. ISTC had always been marginal, but not on this issue: LOC signed up a large group of sponsors and hired a laid-off GM employee to coordinate the opposition. The leaders of Local 595 in Linden enlisted the aid of radical economists at the Institute for Labor Education and Research to develop the case against concessions, and invited unionists throughout the country to come to New Jersey to discuss the issue before it came to a vote.

The opposition campaign paid off. At a meeting in Washington on January 22, 250 angry LOC members developed strategy for fighting concessions. The next day, when the GM Bargaining Council met to hear reports on the negotiations, LOC pressed for a roll-call vote on continuing the discussions. The roll-call forced local leaders to declare themselves publicly; many who wanted to support President Fraser were reluctant to go on record in favor of continuing the talks when their locals had already voted against reopening the contract. To help them out, Owen Bieber, the head of the GM Department, tried to avoid a recorded vote, but his efforts incensed the local leaders. When the roll was finally called, forty-three percent of the delegates voted “no.”

Among those who voted “yes” were leaders whose locals had taken strong stands against concessions; the president of the Flint local, for example, supported extending negotiations but it is doubtful that he would have voted for substantial givebacks. (As it was, his vote merely to continue talks provoked a storm of protest back home.)

THERE ARE MANY reasons why the opposition grew so large. First, although GM has laid off 150,000 UAW workers indefinitely, not all locals have been hit equally. The Linden plant, which produces large Buicks and Cadillacs, has suffered fewer layoffs than have plants producing compacts. Therefore Linden workers don’t feel the same pressure.

Opposition to givebacks was not limited to “safe” plants, however. The Danville, Illinois foundry, vulnerable because of its strong local contract, voted eighty-one percent against reopening that contract in the face of a GM warning that one of its central foundries would be shut.

President Brian Mitchell explains that local members who are still working don’t believe there is an emergency. “We’ve been lied to for thirty years,” they say. “Why believe GM now?”

But the main reason for the opposition to concessions is the deep anger UAW members feel for GM. The company’s call for relief “is a bunch of crap,” said Linden worker Marty Gall. “If the company is in trouble, they should start with the Chairman of the Board.”

Marty is angry at the inequity of concessions. How can Roger Smith, with his \$750,000 salary, call on hourly employees like Marty to tighten their belts? How can Eddy Duarte, who's been in the shop for twenty-eight years, feel sorry for GM? "In 1978, when they made \$3 billion, they didn't call us in and ask us to take some of their extra profits, did they? So how can they ask for help now?" Eddy wonders if the whole thing is a scam engineered by union leaders fearful of taking a pay cut during the upcoming strike.

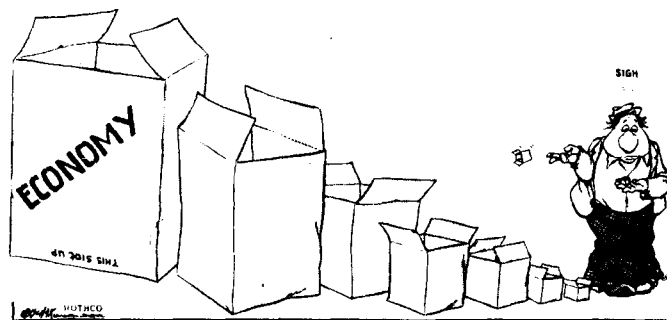
The anger of men like Eddy Duarte and Marty Gall is based on more than their sense of the inequity of the situation. It is rooted in the day-to-day battle union members wage against management of the General Motors Assembly Division.

"For forty years, they've treated us like children," charges Doug Stevens, Local 595's education director. "Take breaks. You have a scheduled number of breaks. If you have to go to the bathroom, and it's not your break time, you have to ask the foreman. He tells you to wait until a relief man is available. Sometimes no one comes. We've had people wet themselves on the line. Even worse, if your wife calls the plant to say the kid's sick, your foreman will be notified, but if he's short of people, it's 50-50, he may not tell you. We had a case where a girl called her mother five times to tell her that her grandmother, who's a diabetic, had passed out. We were short-handed, some bastard in supervision didn't pass the message on. Things like this infuriate the members."

The workers' anger, frustration, and humiliation make them look at the giveback issue as a matter of equity, not tactics. The idea of giving something to GM, when you can't even go to the bathroom when you want to, makes unionists see red.

But workers' anger alone doesn't explain why the UAW rejected concessions at GM. Equally angry workers made concessions in trucking, in airlines, and even at some Ford plants. Ford workers approved concessions because the industry's crisis had touched them more directly. Ford closed down four plants in 1980-81, while GM closed none. Furthermore, in an effort to bring its work rules in line with GM's, Ford has been pressuring locals for work-rule concessions. Thus, at Livonia, Michigan, Local 182 voted 1878 to 181 to give the company more discretion in scheduling overtime and vacations and gave Ford permission to use outside contractors for maintenance work. The local was rewarded with a billion dollar job building automatic transmissions for front-wheel drive cars. Workers in Dearborn, Michigan weren't so fortunate. The steel division of Ford's River Rouge plant (Local 600) granted concessions after Ford warned that layoffs were coming — and the layoffs came anyway.

What happens when a plant refuses to grant concessions? Nothing has happened at Brian Mitchell's plant in Danville. But in Sheffield, Alabama, Ford closed the plant. In Clark, New Jersey, after the local repeatedly denied GM's demands to water down unusually strong work rules, the company announced plans to close the plant then sold it to a union-sponsored Employee Stock Option Plan. The local's radical leaders soon found themselves selling thirty percent wage cuts and work rules GM could never have put through.



Few GM workers had to make such concessions; that is why the GM pact was defeated. But questions remain. If GM employees were not ready to approve givebacks, why did President Fraser take his gamble? And once he declared concessions to be essential, why couldn't he get his troops to follow?

Although it is hard to believe, the UAW leadership never campaigned to convince GM employees that temporary concessions were necessary. UAW spokesmen explain that the union has to *bargain* with the company, not plead its case. In the normal course of labor-management relations, that argument makes sense; it does not in the winter of 1982. President Fraser went out on a limb to improve the union's bargaining position, then declined to wage the kind of campaign necessary to keep the limb from being sawed off.

The UAW leadership underestimated the opposition. Al Gardner, president of the Tool and Die Unit of Ford's River Rouge plant, and a leader of the Independent Skilled Trades Council, suggests that when Detroit sent out its International representatives to take a reading on rank-and-file sentiment, they reported what their superiors wanted to hear. "No one wants to bear bad tidings," Gardner suggests. A source at Solidarity House believes that local presidents were afraid to tell the International how strong membership opposition was because they didn't want to admit they couldn't deliver their votes.

Whether or not it was the International representatives or the local presidents who misread rank-and-file sentiment, the UAW's organizational structure proved incapable of carrying through this new operation. This is not surprising. The UAW's highly centralized but democratic structure worked when the union's task was to enable members to share their employers' prosperity. That structure enabled the UAW to gain uniform contracts; it allowed it to preserve the stable labor relations that corporations demanded; it made it possible for the union to be a power broker within the Democratic party and the halls of Congress, where it pressed for Medicare, the War on Poverty, and full employment. But the union paid a price for its centralized structure. When a union's major decisions are made in International headquarters, members tend not to go to local meetings very often. And when they don't go to union meetings, it's hard to mobilize them in political campaigns.

The UAW achieved impressive gains in the 1950s and 60s, but now faces new challenges. Corporations are fleeing unionized areas for low wage havens in the Sunbelt and over-

seas. Foreign competition makes it impossible for American corporations to pass on labor costs automatically to consumers. The seniority system has crumbled in Congress. And the political parties have been opened up for sale to the highest bidder.

Unions now have a choice. They can cooperate with employers on a much closer basis than they have ever done before or they can begin to mobilize their members to challenge corporate priorities.

THE FIRST OPTION, the "Japanese" model, is currently receiving widespread attention. Unions would join managers in planning production, improving productivity and product quality, and sharing profits. Workers would probably receive lower wages than they've been used to, but they'd gain greater security.

The agreement reached by Ford and the UAW in February marks a step in this direction. It trades \$1 billion worth of concessions over a thirty-one month period for protections that will probably help workers less in the short run than in the future. These include restrictions on plant closing and outsourcing, guaranteed income for senior employees, and profit sharing.

The "Japanese" model is attractive at a time when the auto companies are so firmly in the saddle, and union busters dominate the federal government, but it does not appear to be a viable option. Labor cooperation only makes sense if management can guarantee job security for its employees — but the companies are planning to shift production, and jobs, overseas. David F. Cole, of the University of Michigan, estimates that domestic producers will obtain 25 percent of their parts overseas by 1985, 35-37 percent by 1990.

Meanwhile, Dan Luria of the UAW Research Department believes there is no way the union can prevent new technology from reducing employment levels. "If you slow its introduction at GM or Ford, they lose their market share. If they put in robots, you lose jobs." Altogether, the auto and auto supply industries could lose a million jobs in the next decade. The auto companies will not be able to offer workers real job security. And the UAW leadership will not be able to guarantee peaceful labor relations.

But if the Japanese model is rejected, and the troops are mobilized, where will they march? Recently the UAW leadership unveiled a proposal to stem the hemorrhaging of the auto industry. Their local content bill, officially known as the "Fair Practices in Automotive Products Act," HR 5133, requires automakers to produce their cars here or buy components from domestic companies. Current versions of the bill would establish a sliding scale mandating that a company selling more than 100,000 vehicles in the United States "produce or buy domestic production worth 25 percent of its automotive sales here," while for companies selling 500,000 cars the proportion would rise to 90 percent. According to union economists, the bill could save 868,000 jobs by 1985.

The UAW is adopting this seemingly arcane and complicated approach to protecting its members' jobs because it

believes import barriers do not solve the problem. Even if strong import restrictions on cars were passed, the Japanese would still be able to flood the US market with parts for U.S.-produced autos, and with replacement parts for foreign-made vehicles.

The local content bill has drawn support from an unlikely coalition composed of congressmen in auto-producing states, the Independent Skilled Trades Council, and *Business Week*, which editorialized on April 13, 1981: "Practically every industrial nation in the world — except the U.S. — has imposed a local content bill on imports for years. Detroit, of course, would rather have the comfortable protections of tariffs, or a quota. But a local content requirement could help the U.S. economy without touching off a trade war."

Nevertheless, the bill faces uncertain prospects. Any bill to restrict the mobility of capital would arouse opposition in the current political climate, but hostile *New York Times* editorials would not necessarily prevail if the domestic auto and auto supply industry joined with the UAW to protect American jobs. Several years ago that was a possibility; it is no longer.

In the last few years the automakers have committed themselves to foreign suppliers, and domestic parts suppliers have failed to modernize their American plants, while increasing their investment overseas. For example, Borg-Warner has a joint venture in Japan, supplying automatic transmissions and seat belts for Japanese automakers. And the Eaton Corp. manufactures valves in Spain for autos built in West Germany for sale in the States. If a local content bill were to pass, Japanese parts manufacturers would invest here and capture the U.S. market. This might not be such a bad thing, but it means that American industry will not support the legislation.

The UAW's local content bill, whatever its prospects for passage, points in a direction opposite from the "Japanese" model. Unions can only challenge corporate plans to invest overseas by mobilizing their memberships to confront the corporations in the political arena.

To accomplish this, unions would have to give up the highly centralized structure that was appropriate for the company-union symbiosis of the 1950s and 1960s for a new kind of organizational structure based on informed members and on locals actively involved in the governance of their plants.

There are signs that the labor movement recognizes the need for greater participation. The UAW's recent CAP Council meeting devoted a whole day to informing local leaders about the need for local content legislation. The International Association of Machinists and the American Federation of Government Employees launched a program modeled on the Canadian Labor Congress's successful canvassing effort, to educate members and increase their political participation. And the AFL-CIO has broken new ground by organizing labor activity in the 1982 primaries. Solidarity Day 1982 is devoted to the congressional elections and the new AFL-CIO Public Affairs department is exploring ways labor can get its message across.

Seen in the context of changing patterns of corporate behavior, the UAW's travails are the pains of transition. An organi-

zational structure successful at meeting old challenges proved unable to meet a new one. Now the union faces another test. As the September 14 expiration date for the UAW's contract with General Motors approaches, the union will face a terrible choice: it can make substantial concessions to GM; it can launch an unwinnable strike; or it can tell members to work without a contract, in which case General Motors could cut wages and impose harsh penalties on the union. Brian Mitchell fears that those who led the fight against concessions, like Doug Stevens of Linden, could be voted out of office if things go badly. This would pave the way for the UAW to adopt the "Japanese" model at GM as it has at Ford and Chrysler. Carl Bradshaw, on the other hand, hopes a strike will mobilize the members, strengthen union leadership, and forge new bonds of solidarity.

ASSUMING the UAW does emerge from its painful dilemma in fighting shape, it will need an industrial policy it can counterpose to the plans of Ford, GM, and President Reagan. Four years ago, Luther Carpenter and I published in *Democratic Left*, the monthly publication of the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee (DSOC), a proposal to provide jobs for steelworkers displaced by technological change. We proposed that the United Steelworkers of America bargain with employers to impose a royalty on each ton of steel. Royalties would go into a union- and community-controlled investment fund to provide capital for the reindustrialization of communities where mill jobs were disappearing. Despite the prejudices encountered in America by anything with the word "socialist" in its title, DSOC commands a good deal of respect in many parts of the labor movement; nevertheless, our proposal hit the earth with a thud. And for a good reason. Although the plan makes perfect sense, it's abstract. Not only does it leave unspecified the kinds of investments the funds might make, but it also does not speak immediately and directly to the needs of any powerful institutions.

Another study meets both objections. In *Rational Reindustrialization* (obtainable from "Widgetripper," 19660 Stratford, Detroit, MI 48221) Dan Luria and Jack Russell propose the creation of an investment pool in the auto industry to fund the conversion of Detroit-area plants into factories producing equipment for the energy industry. Luria and Russell argue that the equipment in the auto plants and machine shops, unlike that in steel mills, can easily be converted to make such things as deep natural gas and heavy oil production and upgrading equipment, residential and industrial steam-electric cogeneration units; large coal- and diesel fuel-fired industrial process engines; and mine-mouth coal gasifiers.

Luria and Russell's plan has a number of attractive features. One is that it could provide jobs for former autoworkers in plants that could be organized by the UAW. Both workers and the union would benefit directly. Furthermore, the proposal targets an expanding industrial sector. Somebody is going to make equipment for the energy industry, why not American autoworkers?

Of course, auto plants could be converted to other uses. The

United States desperately needs new railroad beds and cars, mass transit equipment, and millions of new housing units. *Rational Reindustrialization* recognizes that need, but focuses on the energy industry for the sensible reason that public policy now discourages production of railroad and mass transit equipment and high interest rates preclude the construction of new housing, while energy development is subsidized. But this could change. If the UAW, joined by other unions in a revitalized labor movement, pushed for an industrial program targeting investment in these sectors, and convinced some significant group within the Democratic party to put that policy on the national agenda, the troops would have somewhere to march.

The prospects seem remote, but these are not ordinary times. Under worse conditions, labor leaders and rank-and-filers created unions during the Great Depression. Today, one of those unions is experiencing the cruel logic of corporate America's abandonment of American workers and communities. The result could be a disastrous strike, or a destructive fight within the union, but a new determination to challenge corporate priorities could also emerge. That story remains to be written.

Dance

BLACK BALLET

THE FRUITS OF PERSEVERANCE

TWO UNRELATED EVENTS occurring within a week last fall indicated the distance black dancers have traveled in the world of concert dance. New York City Ballet presented its newest male dancer, Mel Tomlinson, in one of its touchstone pieces, "Agon," and Eugene Van Grona restaged various works he first presented in 1937. Aside from the artistic aspects of the performances, their occurrence has a social and historical interest.

Mel Tomlinson is a classically trained ballet dancer who has danced with the North Carolina School of the Arts, the Dance Theater of Harlem, and Alvin Ailey's American Dance Theater. When he was born in Raleigh in 1954 none of these organizations existed. That they now exist and provide performing outlets for talented black dancers as well as white artists and students is a fact of history and perseverance.

In the professionally exacting selection system that governs New York City Ballet's casting, Tomlinson is a clearly qualified dancer. In terms of his own artistry, he is an accomplished one. "Agon," one of the richest of the Stravinsky/Balanchine collaborations, is a spare, economical, and demanding display of classic dancing using medieval dance forms as its framework. Costuming is simple; black leotards and tights for the women and black leotards with white tee shirts for the men. The work has had many interpreters, but Tomlinson is the first dancer to make his company debut in it.

The ballet pours twentieth-century energy into folk forms, and Tomlinson appeared happily cast in its central *pas de deux*.

It is a part that calls for extreme rigor in its outlines and flashes of almost off-hand virtuosity. Tomlinson's ease, as he partnered Heather Watts, one of the company's principal dancers, in meeting the work's intricate demands is both a tribute to his own performing skill and his experience with Dance Theater of Harlem.

The latter is a classically trained company of black dancers founded in 1968 by Arthur Mitchell, who was formerly a principal dancer with New York City Ballet and the first black dancer included in that company's roster. When Mitchell founded Dance Theater of Harlem, he was given substantial encouragement by the administration of New York City Ballet and over the years has been allowed to present a generous number of Balanchine ballets. One of them was "Agon," in which Tomlinson appeared. Dancing the masterpiece under its creator's watchful gaze must have been unsettling, but his confident performance demonstrated again and quite clearly what the world of concert dance was not always ready to accept and for many years vigorously resisted: that a properly trained black dancer has the ability to perform the classic repertory without apology.

In the thirties, blacks' live performing opportunities were restricted to show-dancing; for the most part in all-black shows. Gradually, in the forties, some black dancers made their appearance in modern dance concert groups but were still

too "exotic" for the world of classic ballet. To a great extent ballet still has relatively few black dancers among the major companies. In part this has to do with school opportunities. Training starts when the child is between eight and ten years of age and continues to the late teens when the student dancer is ready to enter the performing ensembles of major companies. If the child does not start in time, he or she will never be able to aspire to a professional ballet career. Recognizing the reality of the process, Mitchell first established a school — and has devoted enormous energy to it ever since.

Though somewhat more accessible to the black dancer, the field of modern dance was slow to put aside its traditional prejudice. When Eugene Van Grona, a white, European, expressionist dancer, came to the United States in the twenties, he made his career on the Broadway stage. Then in the mid-thirties, he placed an advertisement in the *Amsterdam News* announcing an audition for dancers. Well over a hundred applicants appeared at the appointed time, and from among them Van Grona selected forty to comprise the first "American Negro Ballet." In 1937 the company presented its first concert but only after enduring the prevalent racial intolerance that made even renting studio rehearsal space a difficulty. The company was short-lived but did constitute a mammoth step forward for the black concert artist. The company is now a memory but a significant footnote to the history of American dance.

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revivals at the Theater of Riverside Church were masterworks would betray their small but real values. Van Grona's artistic sensibility was shaped in the times when he was an active performer. His works did not break new ground but did portray an intelligent, skilled shaping of then contemporary materials. The most successful piece for the group was "Allegory" which relied on slow dignified processions to make its measured effect. It was strikingly costumed, as were all the dances, with Broadway-bright colors and styling.

Lavinia Williams, an original member of the company, danced a pixie-ish solo, "Caprice," that was cute and playful. (Subsequent to her American Negro Ballet career, she danced in the companies of Martha Graham, Katherine Dunham, Agnes deMille, and taught at Alvin Ailey's School.) Though past her peak now, she performed the work with all of the character-embellishments that are in the arsenal of the mature artist. Van Grona, himself in his middle sixties, showed equal panache in presenting his solos. The most effective of these was "Spirit of Labor." Lit from the front by lamps hidden behind the cutout of a large toothed gear, he mimed working gestures of hauling, pounding, and the like as large moving shadows of him loomed on the back-cloth. The image was impressive in the small Riverside Church Theater and must have been overwhelming in Radio City Music Hall where it had been given its premiere.

Other company dances such as "Children of the Earth," "Hot from the Scorching Sun," and "It All Began on the Showboat" used stock formations efficiently if not overly imaginatively. From our vantage point almost forty years later it is difficult to imagine their original impact. What takes no imagining, however, is the groundbreaking nature of the enterprise. It helped open a door which had been shut. But for Van Grona's and others' determination, subsequent developments like Dance Theater of Harlem might have been even more delayed than they were. Perhaps that thought crossed Arthur Mitchell's mind when he agreed to be part of the honorary committee sponsoring the event.

DON McDONAGH

Screen

VICIOUS CIRCLE PASSING THE MORAL BUCK

VOLKER SCHLONDORFF'S *Circle of Deceit* is a film based upon a Catch 22. Its own title implies the circularity of its argument. It deals with a German reporter, George Laschen (Bruno Ganz), who undergoes a personal crisis when sent to cover the civil war in Lebanon. Laschen and the photographer with whom he works (Jerzy Skolimowski) stay in a Beirut hotel literally between the lines, and slowly, by going out at night to prowl the city in the midst

of the guerrilla fighting, they gain access to both sides of the bloody Christian-Moslem conflict. What they witness as a result is a series of atrocities. Moslem women raped, Christian families slaughtered in their homes, and burned bodies everywhere — left as warnings in burned-out cars at checkpoints, heaped up with the trash at a dump, scattered around a town square like the ashes of so many watch fires.

Yet the film is not really about these horrors with which it confronts us at every turn. It's about the emptiness of its hero. *Circle* begins in Germany, before Laschen's departure for Beirut, with an intimate scene from his private life. He is at home making love to his wife, and it is apparent that they are having marital problems. Laschen's discontent with his marriage hangs over Lebanon like a specter in the film. He divides his time evenly between trying to write his dispatches and agonizing over a letter to his wife. He also has an affair with an old friend, Ariane (Hannah Schygulla), who now lives in Beirut. Making his way through the shell-shocked streets at night, making love to Ariane as the bullets whiz around her house, Laschen is at first quite a romantic figure, rather like John Reed in *Reds*. He's the classic foreign correspondent whose love affairs are set in the panorama of history. The romance remains compelling, however, only so long as we can keep pushing the corpses and the horror into the background of our minds the way they are pushed into the background of the film.

As Laschen's affair with Ariane continues, he becomes more and more directly involved in the war. When she wants to adopt a war orphan, he helps her obtain one. When all the other journalists, including his photographer, pull out because things are getting too hot, he stays behind. Occasionally his physical courage seems to splash over into moral courage. Twice he is witness to murders, summary executions, that he tries to prevent. Yet his behavior at these moments lacks conviction. It's almost out of character. When *he* was stood up against a wall by a militiaman who picked him up on a sweep through the city, he only smiled with cool disinterest. Why should someone so reckless about getting killed himself balk at watching others killed? His occasional objections to the massacres seem unconvincing. They have the quality of a knee-jerk reaction.

Laschen is heading for a breakdown that finally comes when he sees Ariane with another lover one night. He dashes through the deserted, exploding streets during a bombardment, then goes berserk and stabs a Lebanese to death. After that he returns to Germany and his wife. He also resigns from the magazine, walking out of an editorial meeting at which everyone is singing his praises as a reporter. In the overall scheme of the movie, we are supposed to care more about his metaphysical crisis — about the one murder he commits — than about all the other people we see killing each other in the streets. This brutalizes the people of Lebanon. It exploits their misery for the sake of a little art, a little Western-style alienation. If the movie can do this, how can we believe that a character in it does otherwise? What the filmmakers are showing us brings on no moral crisis for them. Why should it do so for the film's

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hero? That's the Catch 22 here, the circle of deceit in which the movie itself is running around.

Volker Schlöndorff directed the film, but it was written by a committee. Schlöndorff adapted the Nicolas Born novel on which the film is based with the collaboration of three other people — Jean-Claude Carrière, Margarethe von Trotta, and Kai Herrmann. Like a lot of committee work, their script gives the impression that everyone evaded responsibility for the decisions made. That's how the suffering of the Lebanese

came to be treated so insensitively. Everybody passed the moral buck. At one point in the film, Laschen is sitting at his teletype in the hotel lobby and suddenly bursts out in self-reproach, "Facts! Yah, they're all facts; but what I do with them is just entertainment." This is an *obiter dictum* from which neither he nor the film ever escapes. It never seems to dawn on the filmmakers that the horrendous facts they are dealing with might actually be more than just a way to entertain movie audiences.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

GALLIPOLI, CHARIOTS OF FIRE, BRIDESHEAD REVISITED

The cult of young manhood

MARTIN GREEN

SUDDENLY, IT SEEMS, we are again accosted by powerful screen images of young men — of the feelings of young men for each other, and of the destinies of young men who represent the whole race. Here are stories which exclude, or relegate to peripherality, mothers and fathers, wise old men, women in general, even beautiful girls. I'm thinking of *Gallipoli*, *Chariots of Fire*, and *Brideshead Revisited*. All three are about English, or at least Anglo-Saxon, young men, and importantly related to the Great War and its historical resonance. But the spirit of the three — where they are successful — is not social-historical. It is a keen passion for the beauty and poignancy of ephebes which links image to image — these are celebratory legends from the cult of young manhood.

The poignancy of the stories derives from the imminence of the Great War, past or future. That imminence is only implicit in *Chariots of Fire* and *Brideshead Revisited*, but it is nevertheless important. The slaughter of young men at Gallipoli and elsewhere in that war drove the survivors to make a cult of their own youth — a cult which reached a climax, if also a caricature, in Sebastian

Flyte's cult of his childhood, his parading of his teddy bear at Oxford. Sebastian commanded the fealty of friends like Charles Ryder because they too despised reality and realism, but only he had found a gesture with which to mock them.

The importance of the war is of course explicit in *Gallipoli*. As soon as we see Archy Hamilton's rose-petal face fill the screen, the title just fading from it, we know that whoever else may survive the battle, he will not. He is too good to be true, too exquisite to merely survive, too fine to be allowed to coarsen, harden, toughen with experience. We are allowed our dangerous delight in him only by our promise that he will die. (The feeling of danger, of intoxication, comes from many sources; the boy's purity of feature and skin is a visual pun on race — we could appreciate it by saying that he is of pure race, purely Anglo-Saxon.) The same promise is given us about Sebastian in *Brideshead*; we are allowed to love him, via Charles, only because he is doomed. He cannot enter manhood; in the most literal terms, he will destroy himself; symbolically, he will melt into Julia.

This particular similarity between the two stories reveals the deeper legend in which they are both rooted, that of Adonis, Attis, Osiris. And it is not a mere coincidence that Frazer's volume of anthropology with that title should have been a highbrow best seller in the years just before and after the War. That was when the cult of young men reached its climax in England.

Gallipoli expresses the sensibility of the age of Kipling almost unmodified. The plot might be compared with Stevenson's *Kidnapped*, the theme with Lord Jim, Rupert Brooke, the Shropshire Lad, Pater's Emerald Uthwart. Nowadays such a legend is cut off from the cultural support systems it had then, and is more purely an aesthetic phenomenon. Then the weight of civilization was behind that legend of beauty and death; the thrust of Kiplingesque literature, of the public school ethos, of the universities, of the empire. If we imagine that pressure to connect manly beauty with patriotic death, and then imagine the experience of the Great War, we shall understand why Waugh and his generation rebelled, and why Sebastian and his generation were "decadent."

The cult of young manhood was a minor revolt against the cult of manhood — the great secular religion of the nineteenth century. That revolt was by and large unconscious before 1914, conscious after. Hence Archy is determined to seek adventure, which was the great ritual of that religion, the rite by which one achieved manhood; while Sebastian is determined not to become a man. (Charles Ryder/Waugh, on the other hand, did seek out adventure later; and in 1939 welcomed the outbreak of war as much as Archy in 1914; they had returned to the cult of manhood.) Thus in all three of these stories, adventure is a masked and muzzled presence; in *Gallipoli* it is caricatured as war — a juggernaut, a monstrosity; in *Chariots of Fire* it

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is diminished as sport, a tamed and domesticated adventure; and in *Brideshead* it is defied — the young men do not run, they lounge — “We lay on our backs, Sebastian’s eyes on the leaves overhead, mine on his profile” — though their idyll is framed, cut out, cut off, by episodes of that later war in which Charles plays a manly part.

It is perhaps a weakness in *Gallipoli* that Archy shows no real promise of manhood. He is entirely ephebic, with his broad-brimmed hat and loose-limbed gestures and loping, sloping gait — defined by the contrast with Frank’s cocky swagger. (Frank is clearly destined for manhood — we don’t mind *him* growing coarse.) In a few static shots Archy is sculpturally beautiful, solid, substantial. But in movement and emotion he loses that substantiality, he ducks his head, his face cracks in dazzled laughter, his features blur in a rosy flush. He never imposes his presence, employs his handsomeness — at the hotel dance, Frank kisses his girl, Archy laughs. He is at his most solid with his eyes fixed trustingly on someone older, imbibing manhood from an outside source, in the first scene from gruff Uncle Jack. The film does not want to see him embody it — its ultimate suggestion is that he is worth something better than manhood.

But of course that is what he must have, as he must have adventure. He has put his faith in manhood. His uncle, the reader of Kipling, has had adventures (the Barbary Coast, the Spice Islands), which is the source of his authority. Archy’s parents simply don’t count, because they have not had adventures. Uncle Jack tells him that war is different, and the film, the audience, thinks so too; but Jack knows he cannot hope to convince Archy; because, however different, war is also the same — is the greatest adventure of them all. Indeed, the film undermines its own cynicism, gives it up, in that shining presence. The audience eagerly agrees with Frank, who won’t “go to fight for the British Empire.” But it is shown how that vulgar skepticism is vanquished by Archy’s radiant naiveté. What the film says, in effect, is, “If it makes him so beautiful, it must be true.”

Thus the landscape is potentially heroic in *Gallipoli* (especially the desert) but not really heroic as in a serious Western, because this is not fully an adventure, and its central characters are not fully heroes, not fully men. And it is not an adventure also because its stress falls often on personal relations, between mates, with sentiments taken seriously. When Frank offends his comic cohorts in the infantry by joining Andy in the Light Horse, we take seriously their feelings of being betrayed, as we would not in a real adventure. Of course his feeling for Archy is as romantic as anything in a novel proper; it follows orthodox class-lines — the tough, knowing city boy, with a touch of the lout, meets a shining knight of the schoolroom virtues, a prince of the copybook maxims come down to earth. (Archy involuntarily attracts the hostility of the true cynic — the man who makes him race barefoot.) Archy is an Australian aristocrat — a toff and a cavalry man — but he is also an angel, the promise of the class system redeemed.

Chariots of Fire, we might say, *should* be about similar themes, but is not. It hams up the heroic effort and competition of sports, but its inner discourse is social and psychological — about the inner problems of the two men. (Archy and Sebastian have no inner problems; they exist so intensely, indeed primarily, as romantic images for other people — and for themselves, if we try to imagine them as real — that they do not deal in the usual complexities and compromises of self-discovery and self-definition. Archy is perfect in his courage and patriotism; Sebastian is perfect in his taste and charm; they are not partial or transitional selves, involved in becoming, they are all being, and can only be broken.)

Thus *Chariots of Fire* is closer to the realistic novel than to the adventure legend. Or it would be if it succeeded. But its realism is of the minor-key nostalgic kind. It essays genre-painting, and the great law of that form is harmony; every potentiality of the subject is sacrificed to that, every poignancy and thrill subdued to reconcile it with the nostalgic tone of the whole.

Of course genre-painting has its virtues, and the best of them is represented by the performance of Eric Liddell, the Scottish runner. He beautifully embodies an idea of manliness about which we may well feel nostalgic. It is strange to us, and was in a way strange to his own times, the 1920s. This is a mode of manliness uncrippled by Gallipoli, reaching back to before 1914, before Archy Hamilton, before Kipling. Eric Liddell was not exactly a man of the nineteenth century, but he was of a generation still in unbroken line with that century, harmoniously developed from David Livingstone’s knowing no such break as separated Charles Ryder and Sebastian from their fathers. Born in China, into a missionary family, and returning to a Dissenting Sabbatarian, teetotal culture, he is radically unlike the Cambridge young men he runs against. (It is a weakness typical of the film that, though so keen on cultural contrasts of a magaziny kind, it does not explore this one.)

THE PERFORMANCE is very fine but the actor — no doubt because of the direction — softens the edges of Liddell’s type. When we hear him actually preaching, it is hard to pay attention to the words, because our attention is all directed to his voice, so simple and modest and manly; what he is saying seems to be all a quotation, offset on the page, an example, or something from outside the performance. There are in fact some intimations in the script that he is a fanatic. Abrahams says he runs like a wild beast; and Liddell himself says he runs for the Lord, and feels God’s pleasure when he runs; but there is hardly a hint of that in what we see. (His throwing his head back as he finishes is perhaps intended to intimate fanaticism?)

That he won’t run on Sunday is a big turn in the plot, but thematically it is named merely as integrity. He has been taught this Sabbatarianism, and he won’t change his conduct at the behest of even the Prince of Wales. But we are never asked to imagine what such a belief means, what a gulf separates that way of thinking from any a film-audience wants for itself. The film stays much further outside Liddell’s life than Abrahams’s.

The representative of Dissent's temperamental severity and moral enthusiasm is Eric's sister; but she has no authority — she is just a sweet, obstinate mouse, dressed or drowned in period costume.

There are many irrelevant ingenuities and elegancies of film making, the running slowed up and repeated, and the behavior often intolerably affected (Abrahams's fiancée is the worst). These frills have nothing to do with the adventure of running, or with serious social history. They would have better suited a fantasy-history of the *Brideshead* kind. In fact the best moment in the film is when Lord Lindsay, in front of his stately home and beside an ornamental lake, practices hurdling with a brimming glass of champagne on each hurdle.

Lindsay is of course a figure out of *Brideshead Revisited*, and he is much better done than Abrahams and the rest. What does "serious social history" amount to in this film? The inner tensions of a man who has to win, and his sufferings as a Jew at Cambridge; and the conscience struggles of a man called to both Puritanism and to sports. What could be more platitudinous than the first — what could more flatly flatter our self-esteem than to watch John Gielgud being anti-Semitic at high table? While about the second the crucial question is never asked. What is it like to believe that God revealed his truth to a Christian church, and that his truth forbids games and sports on Sundays — that God is a God of negations? How can such a faith inspire a mode of manliness as easy, as warm, as vigorous, as attractive, as Liddell's? That is the question the subject asks, but the film ignores.

What is wrong with *Chariots of Fire* as social history becomes clear as soon as we think of *Brideshead Revisited*. Waugh loved Sebastian and Oxford decadence; and at the same time he recoiled from it in grief, and even horror. His intelligence and sensibility served both those contrary emotions, treasuring up the details and elaborating the conceits that satisfy them both. Everything mattered a great deal to him. Nothing seems to matter to the makers of *Chariots of Fire*; we are shown what we are shown

for its period charm.

Of course, there are atrocious vulgarities in *Brideshead*; some worse than anything in the other film. And of course the passion and intelligence are in some sense nonsensical. Waugh could not make good sense out of his contrary perceptions. So he did the opposite, and made wonderful nonsense out of them. He had a very keen eye for significant types and behavior styles — those that "represent the times." (More exactly, he named the types and behavior which cor-

responded to a mood people felt in response to historical facts and forces.)

What the film brings out more than the book is the theme of imperialism — only as background music, of course, but important. The fairy tale splendor of first Oxford, then *Brideshead*, then Venice, is the largesse of empire, the heritage of heroic adventurers, undeserved by languid Charles and Sebastian. This is a world of aristocratic fantasy Charles enters, an escape from bourgeois reality. But it is also rooted in realpolitik facts of

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FAITH & FRATERNALISM

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economic power — in plunder. These are the treasure houses of centuries of European empire, now temporarily exculpated by the end of that empire, briefly becalmed in an Indian summer before the deluge.

The production stresses this effect of general sumptuousness, to the point of blurring important distinctions between, for instance, the two fathers, between Mr. Ryder's Bayswater and Marchmain House. Both seem equally grand and strange, though there should lie between them the crucial gulf that separates the middle class from the aristocracy. Perhaps the very employment of Olivier and Gielgud obliterates that meaning. These infinitely accomplished actors, offering us a reading of each line like a chocolate out of a box of possible readings, and trailing behind them the velvet and ermine, the Stars and Garters of their triumphant careers, bring the history of fifty years of British theater into the story. This production is about all *that* history, too, all that sumptuousness and weariness, of the years after *Brideshead* as well as those before.

THIS LITTLE anachronism is quite in accord with Waugh's intentions. When he wrote the book he expected the aristocracy and its great houses to disappear immediately after the war, but he recognized later that he had miscalculated their endurance. He was thirty-five years previous — perhaps more — perhaps there'll always be a *Brideshead*. It is the characteristic of aristocracies everywhere in democratic societies to seem always on the point of succumbing. For three-hundred years the death of the British aristocracy has been announced by those in touch with the times.

The production is deeply in harmony with Waugh, and may be said to have fallen prey to Sebastian's charm as much he did. (One would like to hear Anthony Blanche's comment on it.) Sebastian is played very well, and avoids the most vulgar error, which would be effeminacy; but in fact he is too tasteful. There should be an edge of outrageousness, of overrefinement, of refusing normality and maturity, to his manner. There must be a touch of falsetto to lines like "Dar-

ing Papa, how young you are looking . . . Don't you think my father very handsome, Charles?"

And what did this friendship amount to? What did Sebastian feel for Charles? What that is positive could Charles mean to him? A confederate, of course; an appreciator, no doubt, someone clever enough to get the point of Sebastian's performance, but ultimately just an adorer. Charles is after all struck dumb in Sebastian's presence, limited to submissive and responsive roles. That is what we are told, in book and film. But if we are to believe in the friendship, Charles should surely project a sturdier common sense, a grosser drive to survive and succeed, a promise of protection. What Sebastian was looking for was another nanny; and Charles was something of a baby-snatcher, his predatory appetites aroused by so much helpless beauty. But the production glides over such realism like one of its own gondolas.

Such languor, such elegance of gesture and posture, such entwinings, such glancings and broodings of empathy and shared silence. "I was drowning in honey," Charles says, and so is the audience. But who is the audience? When one thinks of England today, what does such an elaborate production, with such a galaxy of talent and such a lavishness of taste, mean? What does it say to the immigrant Pakistanis at cafeteria cash registers, and the West Indian bus drivers, and the Ugandans getting diplomas at technical colleges? It shows them the plunder,

and the bemusement of the plunder's guardians. It shows them England dreaming of her past, England fifty years ago, when it chose dreaming. Now we are dreaming of dreaming. Perhaps that is one of the great truths for art to tell England now.

The alternative to dreaming, the alternative to fantasy, was always the weakest thing Waugh had to offer. Here it is of course the Roman Catholic church, which, Sebastian assures Charles, teaches the opposite of everything natural and agreeable. As such, it denies empire, but not in the name of any vision of simplicity and innocence. There is such a vision in Christianity — let us call it Quaker Christianity — which denies all jeweled and marmoreal splendor, ecclesiastical as well as secular. But that never interested Waugh. Such a vision would make sense out of those episodes in which Charles speaks of his failed religious training while the camera shows us gorgeous facades and cupolas and flights of marble steps down into fountains and canals. But in *Brideshead* Christianity stands only for death; Waugh gives us nothing but charnel house chills blowing out of those marble vaults.

The "affirmation" that carries some authority relates just to the death-directed beauty of young men, like the affirmation of *Gallipoli*, and the potential affirmation of *Chariots of Fire*. (For despite its gestures at social history, that film's melting glances between Abrahams and Aubrey, and the opening and closing shots of young men running together, carry that meaning more powerfully than anything else.)

Putting the three together, I am surprised; though perhaps my surprise is provincial, and due to my being immured in an English department; where nowadays every idea and urgency has to do with the image of women, the role of women, the destiny of women — where every student's special topic seems to be in defense of Virginia Woolf or Jean Rhys. It seems that out there, in the film studios, people are still interested in images of young men. They certainly aren't, in here. Perhaps this indicates an interesting split in the cultural organization of our sensibility.



Commonweal: 184

Books: NATIONALISM & ANTI-SEMITISM

IT HAS BECOME something of a commonplace to note how "heavily history hangs over the French," as if it did not hang just as determinantly over Eskimos. The fact is that in certain very sensitive areas, the reputedly history-conscious Gauls are quite unwilling to inspect their past — or even unqualified to do so well. I shall not forget my surprise at being told one day by a major luminary in the French historical firmament that the topic I had selected for a dissertation (the history of the ideology of *la Nation* in France since the Revolution) was "probably unwritable" by anyone raised within French nationalism's embrace.

Anti-Semitism is possibly another such subject. Aside from one superb, but narrowly specialized, monograph by Pierre Sorlin in 1967, the French have largely left it to foreigners to chart this terrain. This is undoubtedly so because the impulse to apologize, or to pose unanswerable (or useless) questions, or to indict polemically is quite irresistible. One gets a better sense of this when one notes that even the best of the foreigners — no less a scholar than the Douglas Dillon Professor of the Civilization of France at Harvard — finds it necessary to conclude a highly laudatory review of Marrus and Paxton's *opus* with the irrelevant caution: "But those who have never suffered a national catastrophe, including partial occupation, hunger, cold, the enforced absence of more than a million countrymen as prisoners of war, the collapse of a regime and of national pride — all of which followed the miserable era of the 30's and the terribly costly and debilitating victory of 1918 — are in no position to cast stones." In view of the fact that he has already absolved Messrs. Marrus and Paxton of any such intention or performance, which "stones" is Stanley Hoffmann concerned about? Is speaking the truth or according justice "casting stones"? For that matter, do prosecutors and judges (or historians) have to have suffered the privations of the de-

VICHY FRANCE AND THE JEWS

Michael Marrus and Robert Paxton
Basic Books, \$20.95, 432 pp.

Steven Englund

fendant (or subject) before they can pass judgment? Is casting stones what the Allies were about at Nuremberg?

An addendum such as this from a scholar such as this makes for impatience less because it insults the intelligence than because it plainly amounts to special pleading. Insofar as it can be demonstrated with scholarly means to scholarly satisfaction, Marrus and Paxton show that the French population under Vichy was at best indifferent to the fate of the Jews (even French ones) and, far more often than not, was enthusiastic about the anti-Semitic policies handed down from on high. Only rarely, and under conditions of extreme and vulgar persecution, did important segments of the French elites and some of the populace speak out (and then for a very short time, and against specific policies, *not* against anti-Semitism in general). In short, I shall make a forthright, summary state-

ment of the sort that Professor Hoffmann undoubtedly wants readers not to make: one may conclude, and not merely on the basis of Marrus and Paxton's fine book, that as anti-Semites go, the French as a nation usually run in the pack about equidistant from the Germans in the lead and the Scandinavians at the rear. (I would urge any dissenter from this opinion to read Jean-Claude Grumberg's recent play "The Workshop" which, while not really being about anti-Semitic feeling in the French lower classes, offers as telling a portrait of same as I've ever seen.)

Turning directly to the book under review, and the larger topic of French anti-Semitism, the first thing to say is that the question of the extent of anti-Semitic opinion — its historically fluctuating popularity — is neither particularly important nor satisfactorily answerable with the kinds of evidence we have. To be obsessed by the question of public opinion is to fish for red herrings. For explanatory purposes, popular sentiment is here of the same pertinence as considerations of patriotic feeling to a study of (political) nationalism: distinct, but



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slight. Our authors are quite right, therefore, to linger on this issue for a short section, to criticize their sources with a narrow gimlet eye, and then to pass on. They are even more correct to imply that the conjuncture of social and economic vicissitudes with particular ideological traditions and governing political agendas, and not popular eruptions, is the really decisive factor in explaining French anti-Semitism.

This said, my second observation is that organized political anti-Semitism has not enjoyed a particularly brilliant career in French history. Vichy might be the exception to this, yet even here (as Marrus and Paxton reiterate) anti-Semitism was always a secondary or tertiary enterprise, not at all central to the National Revolution which Vichy ushered in and tried to actualize. This point becomes apparent when one reads Paxton's excellent earlier study of the whole period (*Vichy French: Old Guard and New Order, 1940-44* Knopf, 1972), wherein anti-Semitism is well limned in 20 (out of 375) pages. For the laudable purposes of exploding self-exculpating national myths, exposing criminals and guilty parties, and simply recounting in full for the first time a fascinating and horrifying story, *Vichy France and the Jews* is an important book. However, in the very dense and dark forest that Marrus and Paxton explore, one can easily lose sight of the larger truth that the place we are in is finally the backwoods.

Political anti-Semitism in France, as its students slowly and frustratingly discover, has always led a kind of shadowy half-life, tied for its vitality to the larger nation ideology of which it was usually a not-very-successful extremist manifestation. Drumont, Laur, Guérin, Mores, and all the other *fin de siècle* anti-Semites either failed to make a go of this or that anti-“Youpi” league or electoral campaign or newspaper, or succeeded because their particular anti-Semitic effort hid behind (and often got lost in) a larger nationalist (and/or Catholic) enterprise. Unlike the German case, where the anti-Semitic tail eventually wagged the nationalist dog, Vichy's *antisémitisme d'état*, politically speaking, never amounted to more than a kind of

sub-set under xenophobia, itself only one element of the nation ideology and itself burdened with the assimilationist need to do battle with all “*métèques*” (foreigners, Free Masons, even French-born revolutionaries, and, nominally anyway, Protestants, as well as Jews). More than in any other tradition of political anti-Semitism, the French have thrown in much that is non-Jewish under the catch-all category, “*juif*.” (Italy, incidentally, offers the tradition of a strong nation ideology with almost no political anti-Semitism; while Austria-Hungary provides an intermediate instance somewhere between Germany and France.)

Antisémitisme d'état thus figures as a subordinate policy of a nationalist regime intent on achieving social stasis and unity and political homogeneity. (Vichy, of course, presupposed, as well as enforced, cultural homogeneity; in that sense *no* French regime has been pluralist or even tolerant.) Anti-Semitism's attraction to the traditional non-racist French nationalists of Vichy (from Pétain and Maurras to Xavier Vallat, Vichy's first Commissioner-General for Jewish Affairs) was partly as a means of dealing with the recent problems of heavy foreign emigration during a depression and partly as a way of combating longterm social, economic, and political disruptive elements historically symbolizable by the term “*Jew*.” (Blum and Rothschild were the two sides of this coin.)

As Vichy's interests were primarily *étatiste*, its anti-Semitic policies were principally political and juridical. Non-French Jews, along with other émigrés, lost their welcome (and were forced to leave); recently naturalized foreigners (including Jews) lost their citizenship. French Jews were declared ineligible to political bodies and unemployable in the civil service, judiciary, and military, as well as excluded from certain cultural and educational careers. Left to itself, the Marshal's government would have gone no further, though some form of “*aryanization*” of Jewish property might perhaps have been undertaken even without Vallat's desire to show the Germans he could conduct as effective an economic purge as theirs. Nevertheless

the *Statut des Juifs* of 1940 (which, typically, exempted war veterans and long-established, assimilated families) had nothing to do with the Germans; indeed it surpassed their *initial* demands and expectations. We could call it, perhaps, Drumont's revenge on the *parlementaires* of the Third Republic.

After the Wannsee Conference of 1941-42, however, the French were required to play their part in the *Endlösung* (Final Solution). In the measure that *antisémitisme d'état* could do so without endangering Vichy's precious authority, indeed as an illusory means of increasing its authority, Pétain and Laval enlisted the French police and administration in the effort of rounding up and shipping off Jews. Ugly street scenes resulted in a show of official distaste from the French episcopacy and some few elite voices; the Prefects recorded a certain amount of public (largely middle and upper class) discontent. Laval, who hoped to win points to fight other German encroachments on Vichy authority, originally agreed to do pretty much all the Nazis asked in the matter of anti-Semitism, but finally elite pressures obliged him to dig in his heels on certain demands — notably the one obliging French Jews to wear the yellow star.

Eventually, of course, both the church's and Laval's resistance was overwhelmed when the Germans invaded even the Unoccupied Zone and ran it more or less to suit themselves. Vichy was obliged to appoint fascists-racists who in turn enforced anti-Semitic policies that diverged sharply from French tradition, but by then, Vichy hardly existed as an autonomous, recognizably French regime. On balance it is not possible to say with certainty (as various Vichyites on trial, or latter day historians, would do) that Vichy, with its resistance to later German demands, saved the lives of many thousands of French Jews. What is possible to say with certainty is that the governors at Vichy undertook policies of native anti-Semitism, that they presently went a very long way to accommodating French anti-Semitic policy to the German Final Solution, and that therefore close to a quarter of France's Jewish population

was dutifully shipped off to die in the ovens.

In sum, Marrus and Paxton have given us a very fine book. What they fail to provide, as I have indicated above, is a

larger analysis of French "national" political discourse and symbolism that would place anti-Semitic policies in perspective and explicate their origins, nature, and limits.

controversy reduced to quibbles"). And they permit the use of metaphors only for the purpose of rendering non-metaphorical statements clearer or more vivid. To say, as Levy does, that Tertulian "advanced the cause . . . by light years" or that a certain "interpretation of the Trinity . . . reverberated across the centuries" is to say nothing.

For another thing, historiography is firmly grounded in philology. In order to prove that impiety and sacrilege were the same as blasphemy in fifth-century Athens, the historian must argue from the language used by fifth-century Athenians, not from English translations of Plato or Plutarch. In order to prove that Socrates was really tried for blasphemy when Meletos's accusation actually reads: "Theòs hoús he pólis nomísei ou nomísdonta, hêtera dè daimónia kainá," and in order to prove that Alcibiades was the innocent victim of "priests and priestesses" rather than, as Thucydides says, of his political enemies, he must read all, not just parts of, the texts he cites in translation. If he decides that certain documents are

Treason against history

TREASON AGAINST GOD

A HISTORY OF THE OFFENSE OF BLASPHEMY

Leonard W. Levy
Schocken Books, \$24.95, 414 pp.

Eric Cochran

L EONARD W. LEVY is a well known authority on American constitutional law whose *Origins of the Fifth Amendment* was awarded a Pulitzer Prize in history. He has now resolved to carry out a life-long ambition to put his many monographic studies into a broader historical perspective. Since he is professor not just of law, but of the humanities, and since he teaches at one of the few institutions of learning still brave enough to

resist demands for specialization and professionalism, he is obviously in a very good position to carry out this resolution.

Unfortunately, the task has turned out to be more difficult than Levy imagined. For one thing, historiography happens to be bound by grammatical, syntactical, and stylistic rules with which he is apparently not very familiar. These rules do not permit the use of colons in the place of relative clauses (" . . . the body: corrupt matter"), emotion-charged adjectives in the place of explicit statements ("hideous blasphemy"), or adverbs in the place of theses for which the historian can be held responsible ("impartially, if promiscuously, Luther condemned . . ."). They forbid the use of transitive verbs as if they were intransitive ("the



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apocryphal—in this case the Gospels, which present “grossly distorted views” and depict “what did not happen as having happened” (pp. 61 and 356)—he cannot then use them as historical sources in support of his own account of what did happen. Otherwise he will expose himself to errors of fact, as Levy does five times on just two successive pages (109 and 110): “The capture of the Eternal City in 467” (1); “Byzantium, the eastern half of the [Roman] Empire, where [in the fifth century] the Greek Orthodox Church dominated” (i.e., was dominant) (2); “Charlemagne . . . founded . . . the Holy Roman Empire . . . [and] endowed [it with] this provision in Justinian’s code” (3).

To be sure, no historian can possess a full philological command of all the documents he uses, particularly in a book with as broad a chronological scope as this one. Whenever he doubts his own competence, he has the right, even the duty, to borrow from those who are competent. But when faced with varying degrees of competence, he must follow the judgment of those who are considered the current authorities in the field. He cannot assume, for example, that the best guide to the Gospel of Mark is a book published in 1925. He cannot depend solely upon a 1913 commentary on the Old Testament and ignore seventy years of subsequent scholarship.

Above all, the historian cannot limit his definition of competence to those who happen to have written in only one of the current languages of scholarship. Overlooking Delio Cantimori and his continuers has led Levy to attribute to George Williams a thesis Williams nowhere proposes: that Socinianism was a revival of Arianism. Following only a long-forgotten work of 1914 other than Nicola Badaloni and Luigi Firpo—or even Paul Oskar Kristeller and Frances Yates, who write in English—on Giordano Bruno has led him to conclude that Bruno is still regarded as “the foremost of the philosophers of the Italian renaissance” (p. 152). And merely extracting passages from, rather than reading, the great number of works he cites in the footnotes has led him to believe that such diverse

authors as William Wilson, Rodolf Bultmann, D.E. Nineham, Oscar Cullmann, “Father Gerard Sloyan,” and “the controversial Catholic theologian Hans Küng” all say the same thing.

But this is really not a work of history at all, the title notwithstanding. It elucidates no current political or constitutional problem, since, Levy admits, the blasphemy laws still on the books of a few American states are neither enforced nor enforceable. It does not elucidate any historical problem either, since he constantly, even deliberately, confuses blasphemy with heresy, and since he evaluates both according to the standards not of the societies that expressed them, but of modern American society, which cares little about either. The real purpose of this book is theological and philosophical, or historico-philosophical. Levy seeks first of all to reestablish the true Christianity professed by a real historical Jesus in accordance with his own “Arian and Unitarian beliefs” and to *écraser* all the many *infâmes* that have disfigured it ever since—from “Paul” (the fabricator of

the letters attributed to Paul) and Augustine to Luther, the reviver of Augustinian attitudes toward blasphemy, from the Anglicans and the Quakers, who persecuted “Arians” in their day, to Martin Marty and Jaroslav Pelikan, who objected to Levy’s “digs” at traditional orthodoxies. Levy seeks secondly to reestablish the long-discredited “whig” view of history. He portrays Luther (but not Calvin, who is excoriated in the seven pages on the Servetus affair) as “progressive” at least in relation to “the Inquisition,” and he reduces “the Continent” to the role of providing “precedents” to what he then ascribes, in more than half the book, to late sixteenth and seventeenth century England.

How well Levy succeeds in realizing these goals is a question that cannot be answered until the promised sequel is published—a sequel that will cover England after 1700, even though English law still has “no equivalent of the First Amendment,” and then the U.S., where, it seems, the 2,500-year quest of Western man for freedom of thought and expression has at last been fulfilled.

The seriousness of life

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

VOL. I: JOURNEY EAST, JOURNEY WEST

Mircea Eliade

Translated by Mac Linscott Ricketts
Harper & Row, \$17.95, 335 pp.

Arthur A. Cohen

IT WILL come as a surprise to American readers of Mircea Eliade to learn from his rich and absorbing autobiography that until his thirtieth year when this first volume breaks off, Eliade was regarded in his native Romania as a novelist, storyteller, journalist, sometime mythologist, but not at all the genius historian of world religions that he became. It was feared by his closest friends that his considerable success as a novelist would compromise the reception accorded his magisterial study of Yoga. Their fears were not unfounded. Philistines manage to be philistines wherever they are and the publication of Eliade’s first major scientific study of Tantric Yoga on the heels of a

suite of novels and years as a columnist for the most important nationalist Bucharest newspaper produced a barrage of philistine idiocy. The fact is that Eliade’s *Yoga* (1936) quickly established itself as innovative and authoritative and although it had been Eliade’s rhythm until then to move between science and the imagination, between the myths of others and his own, by the time of the Second World War that rhythm was broken, never again to be efficiently reestablished. The scientist and savant prevailed over the storyteller although happily the latter has periodically reemerged, yielding the odd novel such as the perplexing and mysterious *Forbidden Forest* (1946) or the little masterpiece, *The Old Man and the Bureaucrat* (1977).

Journey East, Journey West, fluently translated and handsomely published, is essentially an autobiographic *bildungsroman*. Eliade conceives himself

as though a subject in his fictions, marshaling a narrative of personae and events that describe from the vantage-point of his mature years the coming to be of a young Romanian littérateur and savant, child to an army officer and an indulgent mother making ends meet on a modest pension, raising their children, and electing one—Mircea—to bear their hopes and fears. There is little doubt from the earliest pages that Eliade understood himself to be the child of choice and election and perhaps from these earliest experiences of domestic trust and investment, he derived the archetypal intuitions that mark his life. The tale of Eliade *le jeune* is one apostrophized in all the great literatures that Eliade has himself appropriated for the West: initiation by trials and proofs, ordeals by nature and by man, visitations of extraordinary fortuity that yield illumination and clarity, passage into an alien world that he conquers and from which he withdraws, times of personal sequestration and silence, times of loquacity and engagement. All in all, Eliade, interpreter of the primary myths of masculine adventure and discovery, first lived them, then made them into fiction as the initial gesture of distancing their occurrence and finally raised them to the subject-matter of scientific discourse that they (and he) might enter an eternal order where not history, but the rhythm of nature and the universe, hold sway.

Do not for a moment think that all this is set forth as such. Eliade is no sentimental self-server. Quite the opposite. A man of fierce modesty and privacy, his sense of self—so critical to the finest autobiographies—is always present and alert. There is hardly a page without its self-doubt and its vindication, but all this is deeply embedded in a skein of event, personality, scene that obliges the reader to see and hear, rather than to judge. Eliade has no need of our approval in order to endure. His interest is quite different. Innocently cast as an autobiography, places, travels, wanderings, friendships, discipleship, books written and books read—those indispensable elements of autobiography as an account of the work of Chronos, yield to something else, autobiography still, but not

autobiography as it is conventionally organized.

Reading the autobiographies of the great and famous, it is inevitable that the reader has formed some sense of the personality whose life and times are unfolded. Darwin writes in order to inform his children about the education that made for his discovery; John Stuart Mill recounts the exigent educational routine that shaped his philosophic temperament; only Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit* adopts the strategy that Eliade has chosen for his own autobiography. There, Goethe reveals nothing about the substance of our knowledge of his genius, but rather sets forth with immense affection and intimacy the detail of his household, the occupation of his town by French soldiers, his experience of theater, nature, and the arts. Somehow it all seems external to Goethe, but in fact what has been done is that a subtle art has been devised, an art which, like the gushing rivulets of a concealed and deep well, spill with apparent randomness but return to the same invisible source.

So Eliade. What is one to make of an autobiography of the greatest living interpreter of the ancient life of God and the myths of human origins and destiny, who hardly mentions his interest in religion, certainly not his own Romanian Orthodox heritage. Eliade appears to have no particular *sensus religiosus* and yet by some intellectual attraction out of the mass of books he reads by day and night he is drawn to the literature of the Orient and becomes first an Indologist and student of Sanskrit under the great Indian scholar Surendranath Dasgupta and then a historian of world religion.

All on the surface. All this is surface structure. Eliade will tell us nothing about his religious life quite clearly because he does not think of religion—as he understands its phenomenology—as a separate subject-matter of living, as though one minute life is profane secularity and the next redolent with sanctity. If one knows anything of Eliade's sense of the holy (or as he prefers to call it, "the sacred"), there is no significant event in human life that does not refract and dif-



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fuse rays profane and sacred in one. No rite of passage—puberty, graduation, sexuality, travel, birth, sickness, madness, death—can ever be reported as a mere event in one's life, since all events are endowed with meanings that individuate the primary structure of the race of man and allude to the great trials and exaltations of serious life.

The seriousness of life is the given of Eliade's autobiography. Seriousness does not mean life without wit, abandon, sheer pleasure, but none of these human reliefs is separate from the stream in which all life runs. The seriousness is that time present always gathers up the presuppositions of the past that are buried not only in the shallow soil of forgetfulness but in the depths of the spirit and the mysteries of culture.

If there is criticism to be made of this swift-moving, thoroughly fascinating and enriching autobiography, it is to be located in the odd fact that Eliade has written the original text in his native Romanian. Intended initially for the émigré and exile audience of fellow-

Romanians as well as for home consumption of those fortunate enough to come upon the book in Communist Romania, Eliade has assumed that all the world is familiar with things Romanian. Alas, quite the contrary. Unlike Czesław Miłosz who adopts the intelligent strategy in his *Native Realms* of weaving the history of Polish culture and literature into the narration of his own origins and roots, Eliade has forgotten our ignorance. His autobiography abounds with references to the classics of Romanian literature, the cultural heroes of Romania between the wars, the nationalism of the Iron Guard and the politics of reaction and anti-Semitism, the novelists and poets of his day, none of whom we know. But even more than a literary itinerary, the reader wants some sense of the lure of the homeland, the topography and cultural ancestry of Romania. After all it is that deep well, even more than the depths of ancient India, that nourish Eliade, that persuade him to hold on, to take up a complex love affair, to press forward as *littérateur* and scholar rather than return to India as he had first thought likely.

Journey East, Journey West is superbly narrated by a man who is not yet ready to confide his secrets. He is willing to write about himself, but he guards his real origins and we must honor his reticence. He says to himself, undoubtedly correctly, that more is to come, that another masterpiece is beyond the present one. As much then as we would wish to know how the mind of Eliade works, how he did his research, how he devised his speculative language and tracked his discoveries, there is precious little of this in his autobiography (much more is to be found in the marvelous volume of Eliade's conversations with Claude-Henri Rocquet, *L'Epreuve du Labyrinthe* which should be translated

promptly). At precisely such moments when one thinks the savant will reveal his method, the novelist in Eliade kicks the struts from beneath the intellectual scaffolding and new images, new tales, new wonders of human friendship and affection replace reflection and the narrative presses on.

Correspondence

(Continued from page 162)

Mr. Garvey misses his own advice here, for the problem is not that the sacraments may "degenerate into merely social occasions," but rather as he himself says, that the church may not "fulfill its most profoundly important contemporary vocation — respecting the desire . . . to fill up the emptiness, to bring the light of meaning to a world drained of meaning's possibility." The problem is *respect!* Let us respect the desires of those who seek the rituals and they *will not be* merely social occasions but rather will be social occasions with meaning.

So what is the minister's response to the marginal Catholic? We follow Christ, who ministered to marginal persons of all kinds. We offer hospitality, we offer respect, we listen, we seek out their story of alienation or suffering or separation, and we invite them home. We welcome them home. We do not judge. Therefore, we do not decide to withhold the gospel, but we share the Good News, face to face. We welcome them to the Christian community, to share their faith with us and ours with them, all of us imperfect but gathered at the welcome table to celebrate our being made whole in Christ.

The primary question is not this or that sacrament, for all sacraments alike are celebrated here by Catholic Christians. The primary question is Christian community, faith community. Are you among us? those who seek sacramental rituals but refuse Christian community must be told there is no such thing. It would be disrespectful — indeed dishonest — to dispense the sacrament apart from faith community. We have no right to dupe them. We have no right to tell them something is when it is not.

Nor does it help to say the minister's

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REVIEWS

STEVEN ENGLUND's *study of the nation ideology of France, 1770-1914, will be published next year.*

ERIC COCHRANE *teaches history at the University of Chicago.*

ARTHUR A. COHEN *is the author of several books, including In the Days of Simon Stern and Acts of Theft (Harcourt, Brace).*

faith will supply what the marginal Catholic's faith does not. Who decides his faith is so sufficient that he may stand in another's place before God? It is impossible, because faith is a personal free decision to accept the love of Christ. It is impossible, because it is Christ in whom we have faith, not the priest. It is impossible, because we all approach God knowing our faith is not sufficient — "Lord, I am not worthy to receive you . . ." It is not the priest who is marrying. The priest is not being baptized. To defend this approach by reference to infant baptism is to advocate treating adults like infants.

We invite the marginal Catholic to the Christian community, and to do so honestly we must present the community as it is. We cannot arbitrarily include those who do not want to be included. We cannot make the sacraments something they are not. This would be no favor to the marginal Catholic, for it would withhold from him or her this opportunity to enter meaningfully through this event into faith. It would be a formula for perpetual marginality.

Mr. Garvey is concerned by the church's demand that those requesting sacramental celebrations understand the theology of those celebrations and further, that they articulate that theology. He offers the challenge: who indeed understands the mystery, from apostles to today's clergy, from age seven to age seventy? Well said, for our understanding grows with experience and learning and will never be complete in this life, if ever. Yet there is no way, consistent with respecting the integrity and infinity of the human person, to use this as a reason for not sharing the meaning of the sacraments at an understandable level and therefore requiring an understanding of the sacrament at that level.

Mr. Garvey's confusion is that he thinks the church's ministers are out there protecting the sacraments from being "reduced to sentimental social occa-

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sions." In fact, the church's ministers are not in the protection business at all. We are in the business of sharing the Good News, in word and deed, which requires honesty and compassion and more than a sentimental acquiescence. It requires saying, sometimes: that which you seek is not here, but let me tell you what is here. We must value the seeker enough to be honest.

FRANK SCHWEIGERT
Pastoral Minister
St. Frances Cabrini Church

Children's crusade

Saint Paul, Minn.
To the Editors: Thank you for including Jules Rabin's article on "The Children's Campaign" in the Feb. 12 issue. The story of how a group of children, most of them from Vermont, organized and carried out a campaign for nuclear disarmament to the door of the White House is movingly written and should be widely read.

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Anthology

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THIS FIRST SPRING ISSUE provides a good sampling of the range and relevance of the comment *Commonweal* presents in every issue. Likewise the following list of recently published articles further indicates the quality of the material consistently provided to the magazine's subscribers.

Public Affairs: The Editors, "El Salvador, America's Poland" . . . Denis MacShane, "Solidarity and the Church" . . . Richard John Neuhaus, "Mechanic of the New Right" . . . Richard J. Krickus, "To the Finland Border" . . . Sudhir Sen, "After the Green Revolution" . . . The Editors, "It's Still NX on the MX"

Religion: John Garvey, "Choice as Absolute" . . . Bishop Roger Mahony, "Catholic Conscience and Nuclear War" . . . Mary Gordon, "Coming to Terms with Mary" . . . Special Issue on Abortion . . . John Stevens, "What Buddhist Monks Can Teach Us" . . . Max L. Stackhouse, "Religious Right: New? Right?"

Literature and the Arts: Saul Maloff, "Vladimir Nabokov" . . . Maureen Mullarkey, "Charlotte, Act of Exorcism" . . . Dennis O'Brien, "A Hankering for Pre-Plato" . . . Eric Foner, "History in Crisis" . . . Jean Bethke Elshtain, "Philosophers vs. the Family" . . . Jeffrey Meyers, "W.H. Auden"

Coming in Future Issues: Arthur J. McGovern, Jr., S.J., "Liberation Theology in Latin America" . . . Nicolaus Mills, "The New Realism" . . . Dorothy Esther Connors, "Quo Vadis, Women's Movement?" . . . David R. Lowry, "The Reverend Ian Paisley" . . . Francis Flaherty, "Church and State" . . . James Michael Weiss, "Religious Studies" . . . James Burtchaell, "The Future of Our Fellowship."

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